Dragon Knights
14
TOKYOPOP
Mineko Ohkami

Dragon Knights

Written and illustrated by
Mineko Ohkami

Volume 14

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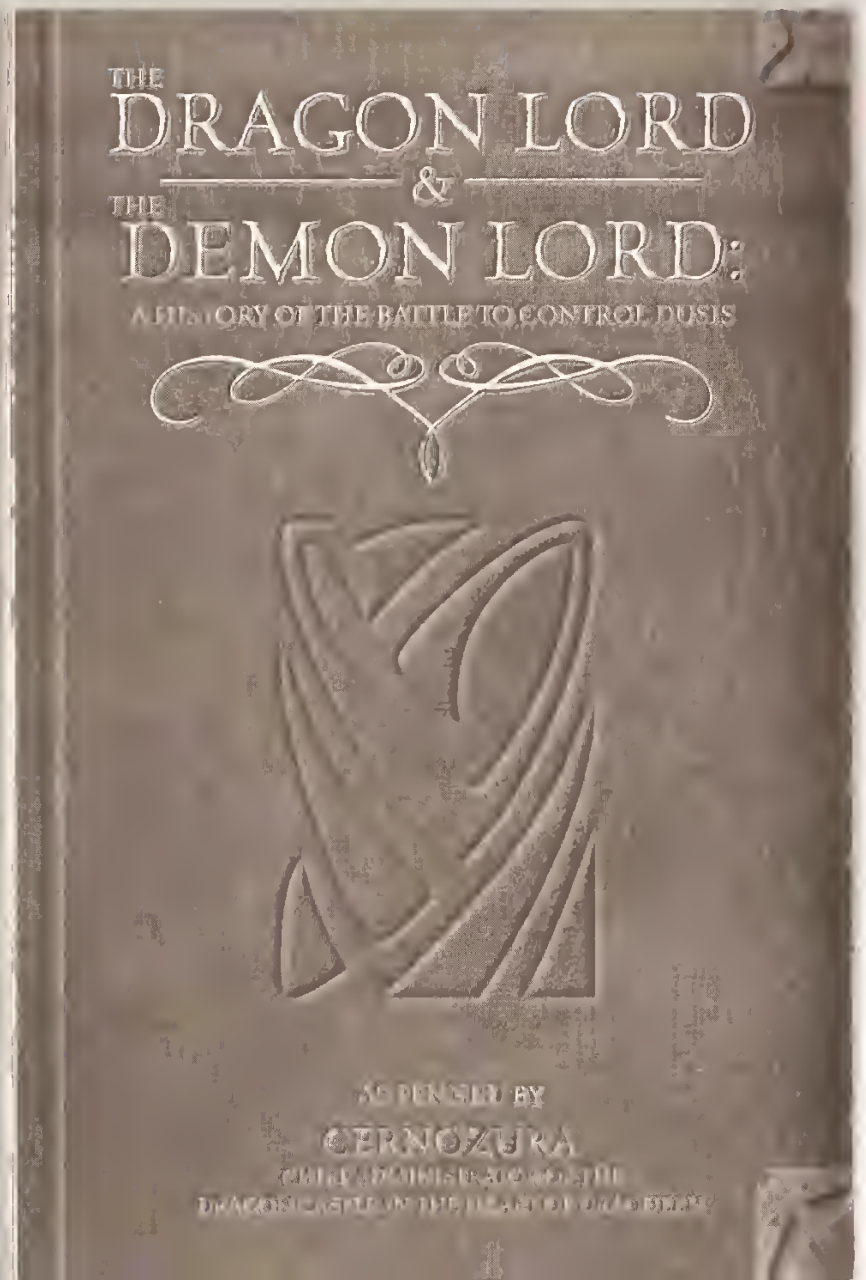

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Dragon Knights Vol. 14

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Dispatched eastward on a mission to retrieve three powerful treasures for Lord Lykouleon, the thief Ritchel and her faerie companion Ringleys have successfully obtained the treasures, only to find themselves caught within a maze of a trap devised by the fiendish Rharl. Freed from the cave of confusion by a friendly specter, Ritchel and Ringleys now face a long journey homeward. It's a perilous trip that will take them directly through the Forest of the Damned, an unholy jungle in the heart of Nadil's Kingdom of Ramaldia.

Meanwhile, the Dragon Knights have enjoyed what has proven to be a bittersweet reunion. Rath's life has been restored to him, and the impassioned Dragon Knight of Fire has vowed that he will not rest until Cesia has been rescued. Hardly ones to let their comrade face death by himself, Rune and Thatz have agreed to accompany him to Ramaldia. However, getting there may prove difficult. Entering the Demon Realm will require the assistance of a demon, and in light of the Dragon Clan's war with Nadil, demons aren't likely to be too forthcoming...

Keeper of the Tome

My name is Cernozura, and I am the chief administrator for the Dragon Castle, Dragueen in the heart of Dragoon, the Dragon Kingdom. Within these pages I will attempt to chronicle the events of yesteryear in the hopes that it will in turn offer some future understanding of the chaos that currently befalls us. I feel it's imperative that I record a comprehensive history of the events that have led to this dark hour, for I fear that none will remain to tell the tale. My only hope is that this tome may survive so that future generations will know of the valiance of the Dragon Tribe.

Rise of the Demon Lord

Our worst fears have come to pass. The Demon Lord Nadil has been resurrected and he has stolen from the bosom of our care the fortuneteller Cesia, who harbors an incredible magic that we have only begun to witness. In the service of a villain as pernicious as Nadil, Cesia, whether against her will or willingly giving in to the seductive charm of the dreaded Demon Lord, may prove to be the most dangerous threat we've faced.

A World Away

Word has arrived from distant shore that two allies, long feared dead, have, in fact, been working dutifully and tirelessly for the betterment of our cause. Vowing to aid the dying faerie race, Nohiro, a human who once assisted the Dragon Knight of Water, has journeyed far in search of the fair folk. Accompanied by three faerie companions, Nohiro narrowly survived a confrontation with Garfukiy, Rharl the Alchemist's sadistic human companion, in the lost continent of Arinas. It was a tragic battle, and while Nohiro did lift the curse that had befallen Arinas, thus restoring life to the dead continent, the price for the victory was high. Two of his faerie companions were slain.

The Villains of Dragon Knights

Nadil

The evil and justly feared Demon Lord Nadil had been slain by the Dragon Lord but his body was recently retrieved and resurrected by his loyal army. Now he once again presides over the Demon Realm, hungry for revenge.

Demon Officers

Shydeman

One of Nadil's generals, Shydeman led the successful attack on Draquesn that brought back the Demon Lord.

Shyrendora

Another general. Shyrendora is sister to Shydeman and also to Tethsus, who fights against her as one of the Dragon Officers.

Fedelta

Answering directly to Shydeman, Fedelta has become one of the most vicious officers in the Demon Army.

Lady Medicinea

Another officer in Nadil's army. Medicinea has an ongoing rivalry with Fedelta.

Other Enemies

Bierrez

The infamous rogue demon, Bierrez's loyalties lie not with the Demon Lord but with himself.

Saabel

The so called "Collector of Corpses," Saabel possesses the ability to reanimate the dead into puppets he controls.

Kirukulus

An evil sorcerer who was defeated by both Kirukulus still lives and is determined to control Dusis.

Perhaps the most unpredictable of Lykouleon's enemies is the Nankin Wizard residing on the lost continent of Xanadu. Khart is unbelievably powerful and longs to rule both the Dragon and Demon Realms. Thus far, Khart has focused his unrelenting Lykouleon, but he may be a menace for time until he sets his sights on Nadil as well.

Khart

The Nankin Wizard Khart is an alchemist capable of creating demons. He has gathered legions of them, including Nadil.

Garfakey

Khart's human assistant, Garfakey is sneaky and jealous. He wishes to become a demon, because Khart has repeatedly dismissed.

The Heroes of Dragon Knights

Lord Lykouleon

The beloved Dragon Lord, Lykouleon is the sovereign ruler of Draqoon. The resources of the Dragon Clan and the might of the Dragon Army are at his command.

Lady Raseleane

Lykouleon's queen, the Lady Raseleane was rendered barren by the Demon Lord and unable to provide Lykouleon with an heir.

Dragon Officers

Harnessing the power of the five Dragon Bells, the Dragon Officers should number five strong, but after the Demon Army's assault on Draquesn, only two officers remain.

Ruwalk

The Yellow Dragon Officer and Secretary of State.

Tetheus

The Black Dragon Officer and Secretary of Security.

Cernozura

The Dragon Castle Administrator, Cernozura is also a self appointed castle historian.

Dragon Knights

Rath

The Dragon Knight of Fire. Rath is part Yokai and lives for killing demons.

Thatz

The Dragon Knight of Earth, the human Thatz was once a thief and his love for gold hasn't abated.

Rune

The Dragon Knight of Water. Rune is an elf and has abilities the other two Dragon Knights lack.

Other Allies

Cesia

A half-demon fortuneteller with the ability to enhance the power of those in close proximity to her.

Zoma

Cesia's demon friend and companion.

Tintlet

A faerie who has sacrificed much for her beloved Rune and her dying race.

Kitchel

Another thief loyal to Lykouleon. Kitchel possesses the powerful Three Treasures and is trying to get them to Draquesn.

Ringleys

A faerie who was rescued from a demon and now accompanies Kitchel.

Delte

Lykouleon's human fortuneteller.

Star Princess

Not much is known about this powerful princess, but she has assisted Rath on several occasions.

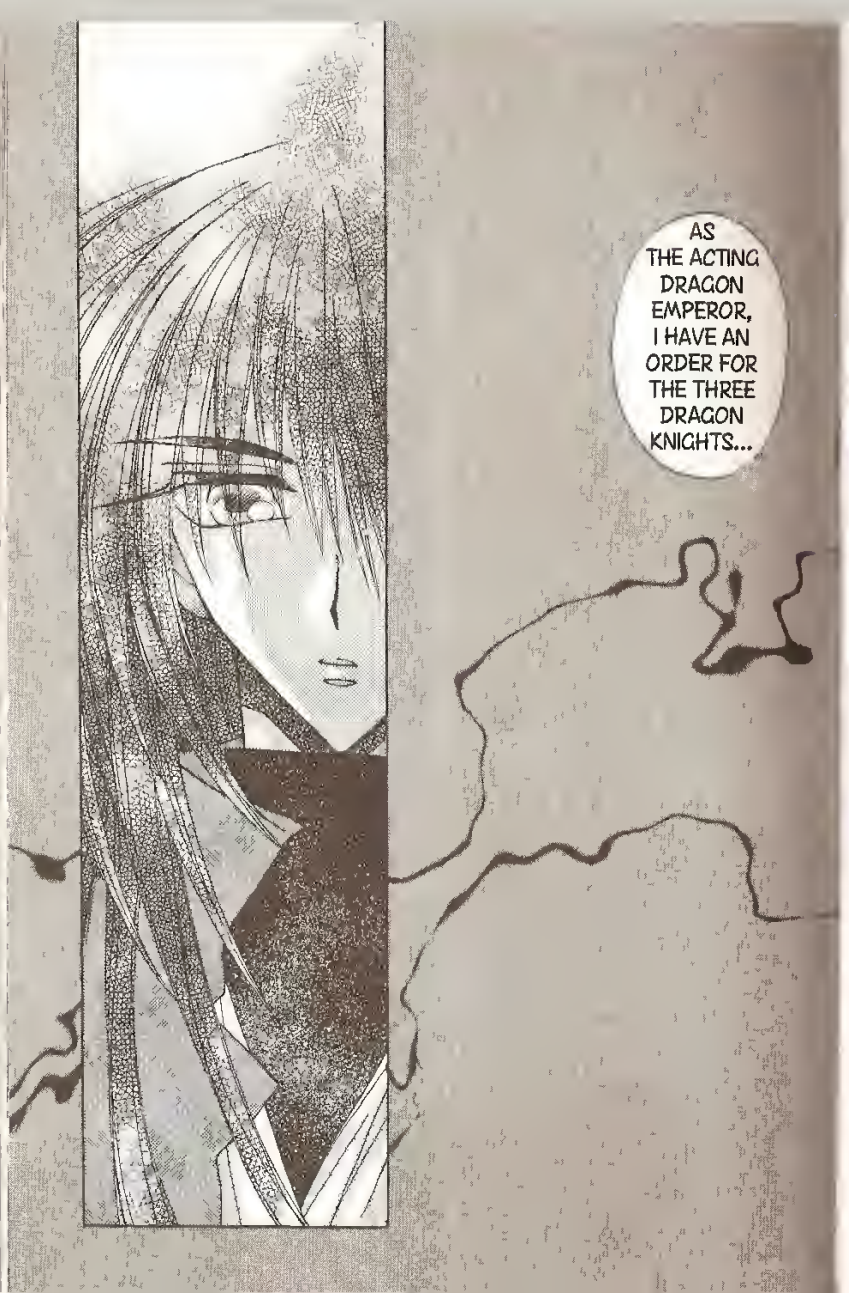
Grinfish

The Star Princess's bodyguard. Both the Princess and Grinfish seem to be friendly to Lykouleon's cause.

Nohiro

A human on a mission to save the dying faerie race. Has assisted Rune in the past.

DUSIS
Mt. Emphaza
Yuba
GLACIOSA
Bertha Forest
KAINALDIA
Nadii's Castle
Costa Rica
MEMPHIS
Misty Valley
Miratte
HERMOSA
Faerie Forest
Chantel
Fiori
Fiori Forest
Lyia
KUULTA
DRAGOON
Lenwa
N
ARINAS
Cave of the Thief Treasures



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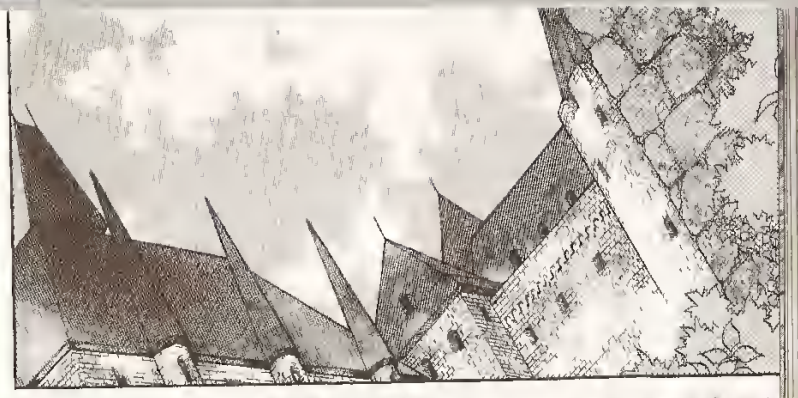
DRAGON KNIGHTS
ドラゴン騎士団
A World Away

GARFAKCY!
MAYBE HE'S OUTSIDE IN THE GARDEN...
LW...

DAMMIT, GARFAKCY ...
I'M HUNGRY. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO MAKE ME COOK NOW, ARE YOU?

WHERE ARE YOU?

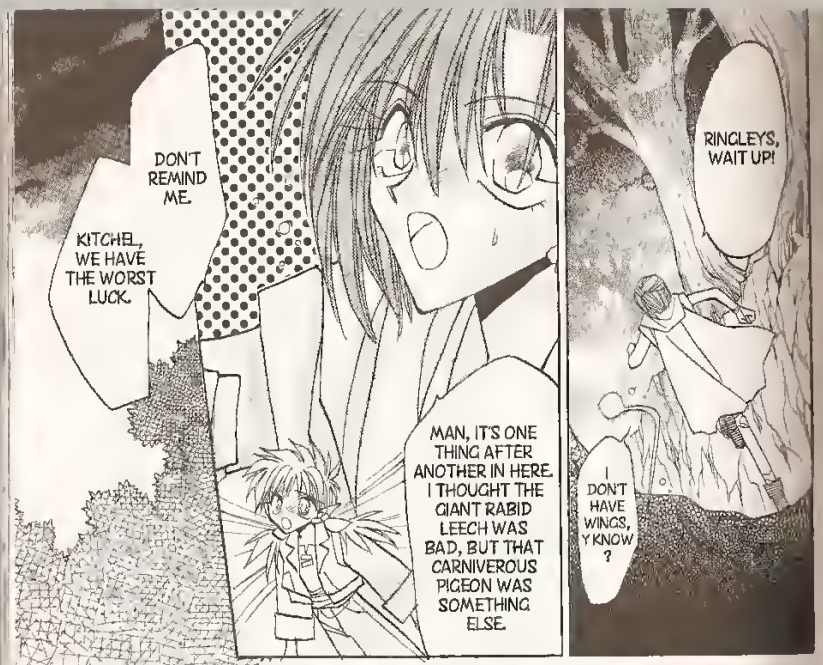
I'M NOT IN THE MOOD FOR GAMES, GARFAKCY...

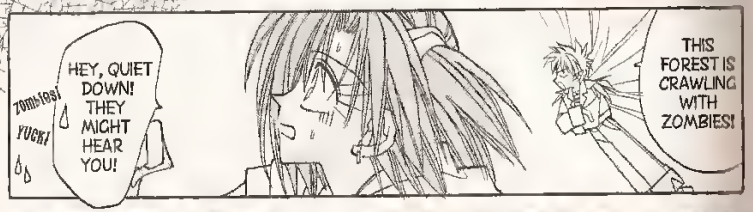


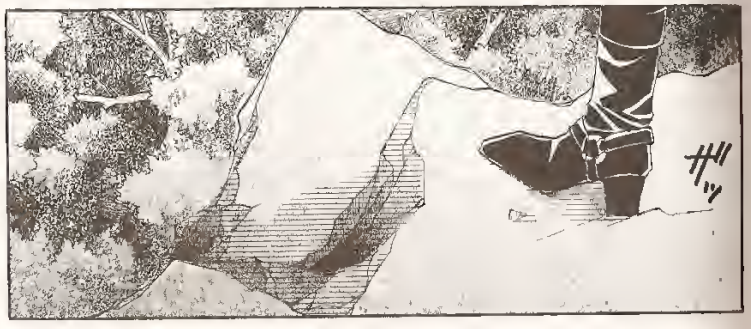
I'M HOME.
GARFAKCY?

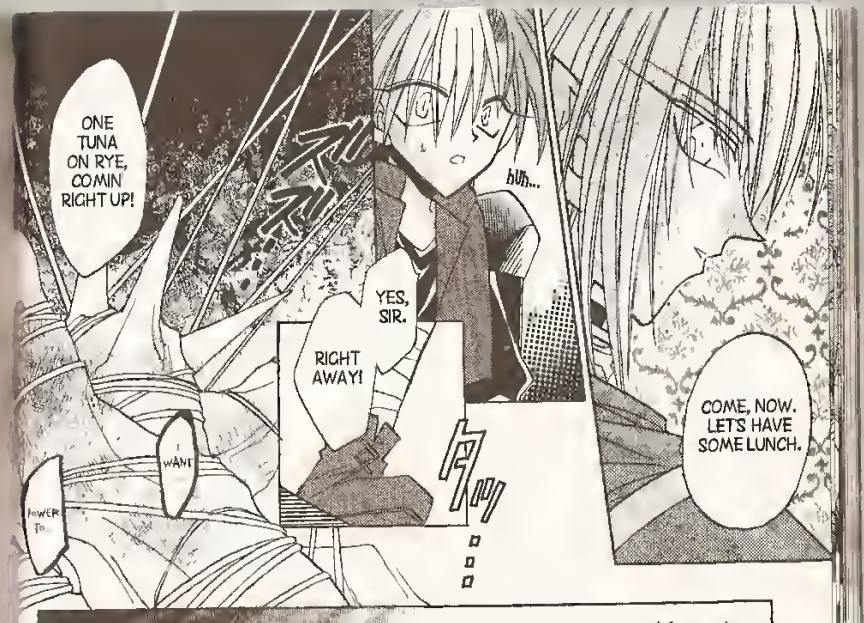
キキ…
ウッ…
グチュ

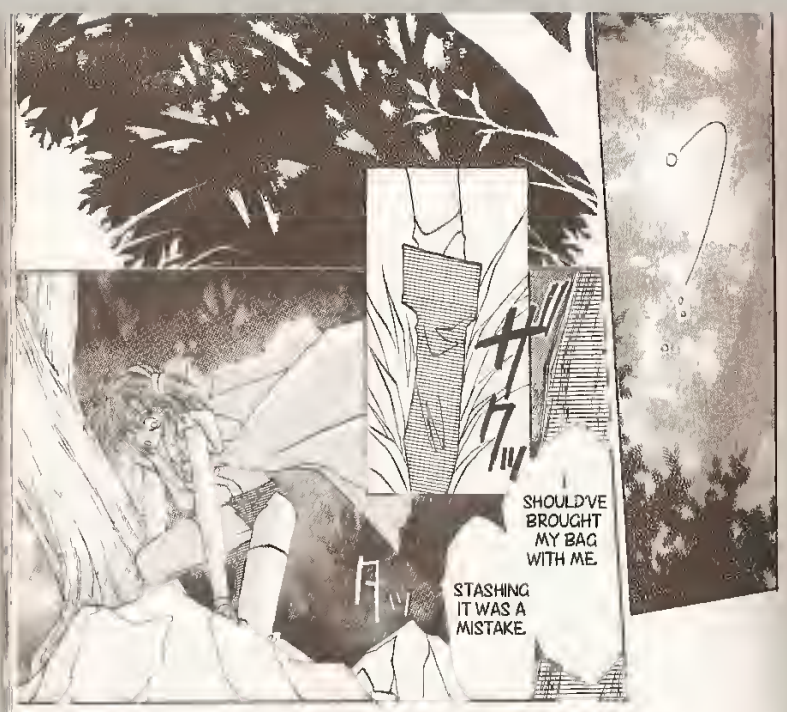
BUT LORD KHARL...
Sandwich?
ACTUALLY
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, GARFAKCY... ...I WAS GETTING SICK OF THAT THING. IT WAS STARTING TO DRAW FLIES.
YOU'RE BEING NICE. THAT'S SCARY.
Huh?
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KILL ME?
I WAS JUST GOING TO ASK IF YOU COULD MAKE ME A SANDWICH. YOU KNOW HOW I HATE TO COOK.
LORD KHARL, I'M SORRY.
WHILE YOU WERE GONE, WE HAD, UH... WE HAD A LITTLE ACCIDENT.
I REALIZE I FAILED YOU.
I JUST AS THAT AFTER YOU KILL ME ...
...YOU BURY ME IN THE GARDEN. I THINK I DESERVE THAT MUCH.
ストロ
POWER...
I DESIRE IT
I AM BE-COMING


DON'T REMIND ME.
KITCHEL, WE HAVE THE WORST LUCK.
MAN, IT'S ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER IN HERE. I THOUGHT THE GIANT RABID LEECH WAS BAD, BUT THAT CARNIVEROUS PIGEON WAS SOMETHING ELSE.
RINGLEYS, WAIT UP!
I DON'T HAVE WINGS, Y KNOW?


HEY, QUIET DOWN! THEY MIGHT HEAR YOU!
zom-toss
yuck!
THIS FOREST IS CRAWLING WITH ZOMBIES!

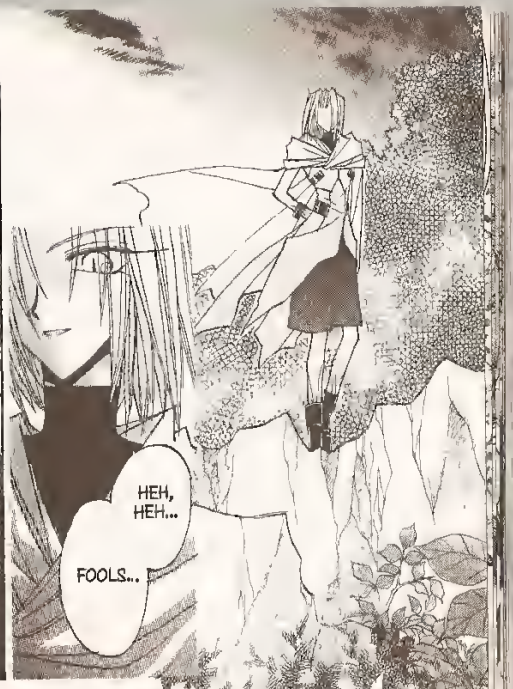



ONE TUNA ON RYE, COMIN RIGHT UP!
huh...
YES, SIR.
RIGHT AWAY!
I WANT
POWER TO
COME, NOW. LETS HAVE SOME LUNCH.


SHOULD'VE BROUGHT MY BAG WITH ME.
STASHING IT WAS A MISTAKE.

IT SURE WOULD COME IN HANDY RIGHT NOW.
GIVE ME.
YOUR BODY.
WHAT WAS I THINKING?

WHO KNEW BEING CHASED WAS SO TIRING?
HOW COME THE BAD GUYS NEVER GET TIRED?
I THOUGHT ZOMBIES WERE SUPPOSED TO BE SLOW!


HEH, HEH...
FOOLS...

I CAN'T BELIEVE I'LL B-BE OUT OF BREATH.
WAIT RIGHT THERE. I'LL FIND US A PLACE SOON.

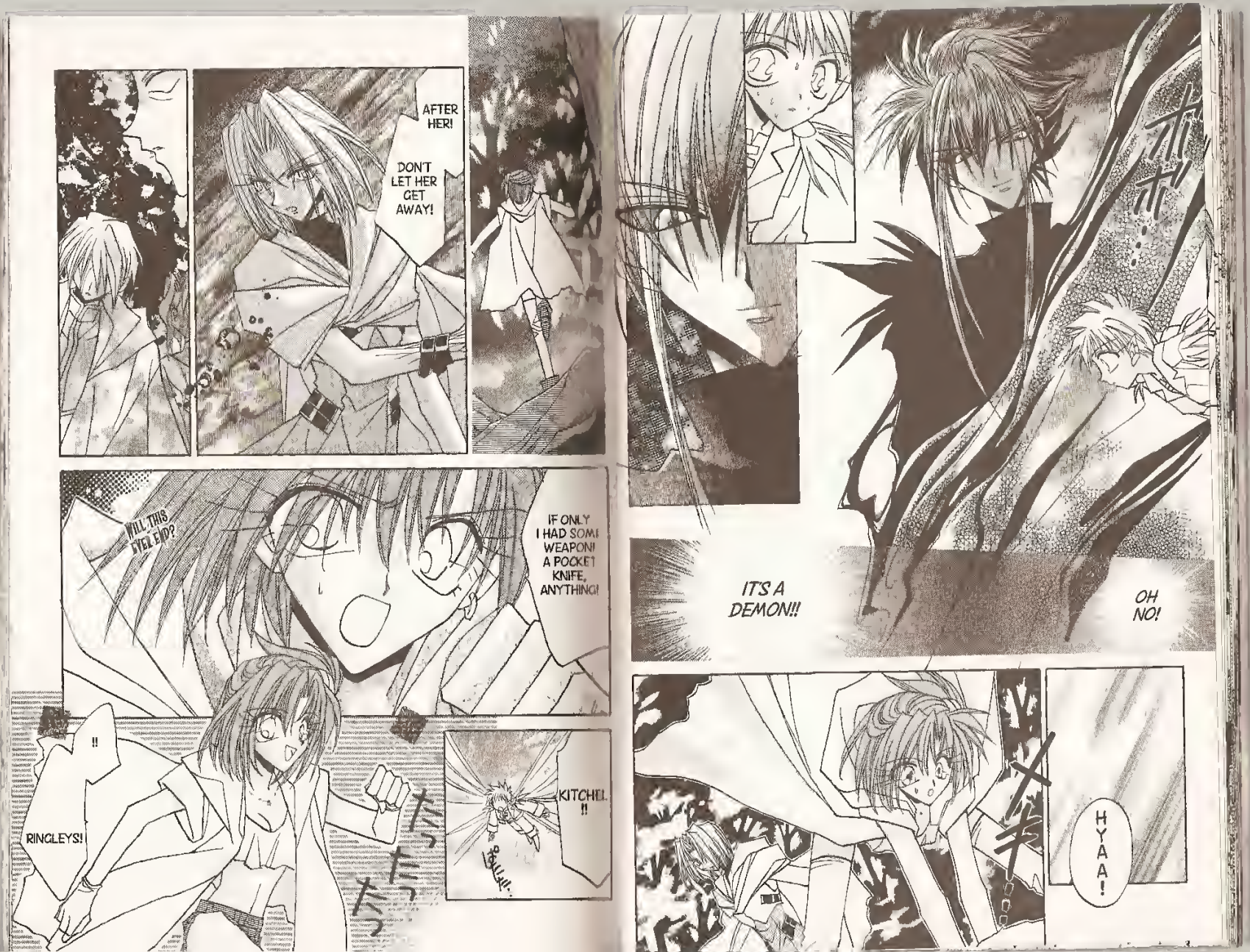
SOUNDS G-GOOD ... THANK YOU.
WHY DON'T I SEE IF I CAN FIND A GOOD PLACE TO HIDE?

I DON'T KNOW H-HOW MUCH LONGER I CAN K-KEEP THIS UP.

HUH?
IS THAT A CAVE?
MAYBE WE CAN HIDE IN THERE.
YOU KNOW, WHEN ALIVE, SOME OF THESE SOULS WERE MEMBERS OF THE DRAGON CLAN. YOU WOULD THINK THAT THEY WOULD BEHAVE WITH A MODICUM OF DECENCY.
HMPH. DRAGON CLAN, DEMON, FAERIE...
ONCE THEY'RE DEAD, THEY ALL SMELL THE SAME.
UH, NO!! EWW!
WHAT'S WITH YOU ZOMBIES? RELAX!
YOU'RE DEAD. YOU SHOULDN'T BE WORKING SO HARD.
TAKE MY PLACE
GIVE ME YOUR BODY
TECHNICALLY, THEY'RE NOT ZOMBIES. THEY'RE MARIONETTES. LIVING SOULS TRAPPED IN PUPPETS THAT I CONTROL.
THAT'S WHY THEY WANT YOUR SOUL. THEY'RE HOPING YOU'LL TAKE THEIR PLACE.

THEY FOLLOW HIS ORDERS?
THOSE CORPSES...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
LOOKS TO ME LIKE HE'S ANOTHER BAD GUY. I SHOULD TELL HIM TO TAKE A NUMBER.
YOU'RE IN KAINALDIA, IN THE FOREST OF THE DAMNED, TO BE PRECISE.
THE HEART OF LORD NADIL'S KINGDOM.
I AM THE DEMON SAABEL, AND I'M IN CHARGE HERE.
YOU COULD SAY I HAVE A KNACK FOR COLLECTING THE DEAD...
THAT'S JUST GREAT.
YOU'D THINK THIS PLACE WOULD BE ON A DAMN MAP! HOME OF THE DEMON LORD AND ALL...
Now that's either it, I didn't choose the map.
Huh?
AND HER BAG...
I SHOULD GET IT FOR HER.
NOT BAD... THIS COULD WORK.
I'D BETTER HURRY.
KITCHEL'S OUT IN THE OPEN.
SNAP
MAY I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS PLACE, RIGHT?
AND YET, YOU STILL VENTURED HERE. WHY?

O-kaaay... Well, nice meeting you. Gotta run.
HEY!
HOW DARE YOU WALK AWAY? I WASN'T FINISHED.
come back here!
すたたた
NO OFFENSE, BUT I'VE HAD MY FILL OF DEMONS FOR THE DAY.
IT APPEARS THAT SOMEONE'S IN NEED OF A LESSON IN COURTESY. IT'S RARE THAT WE GET VISITORS HERE IN THE FOREST OF THE DAMNED AND I THOUGHT I'D COME WELCOME YOU.
BUT IF YOU'D RATHER I LEAVE YOU ALONE, FINE. JUST BE AWARE THAT THERE ARE FAR WORSE THINGS THAN ZOMBIES HERE.
NOW, WOULD YOU LIKE TO RE-CONSIDER?
SHEESH, I FINALLY FIND A MAN THAT'S INTERESTED IN ME AND HE'S A DEMON.
SAABEL, I'M SURE FOR A DEMON YOU'RE ALRIGHT, BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS RIGHT NOW.
WE'RE GOING TO NEED THAT.
THERE'S SOME SACRED WATER IN THE BAG.
THAT STUFF'S GREAT FOR KILLING ZOMBIES.


AFTER HER!
DON'T LET HER GET AWAY!
WILL THIS STEEL HELP?
IF ONLY I HAD SOME WEAPON! A POCKET KNIFE, ANYTHING!
!!
RINGLEYS!
たったったっ
KITCHI.
!!
IT'S A DEMON!!
OH NO!
HYAA!

IT'S OVERFLOWING WITH THE SOULS OF THE DEAD. EVERY ONE OF WHICH WANTS YOUR BODY.
THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF THEM, AND ONLY ONE OF YOU.
TELL ME, KITCHEL, ARE YOU THE BETTING SORT?
SURE LIKES TO HEAR HIMSELF TALK, DOESN'T HE?
sigh
PERHAPS I SHOULD JUST KILL YOU AND COLLECT YOUR SOUL AS WELL.
ONE MORE DOLL COULDN'T HURT.
BUT THEN WHO WILL ENTERTAIN ME?
GREAT. ONE DEMON WAS BAD ENOUGH. NOW THERE ARE TWO?
WELL, WE CAN'T RUN FOREVER.
DID YOU FIND A PLACE TO HIDE?
I FOUND A GREAT PLACE.
THIS WAY!
I WAS ON MY WAY TO RETRIVE THE SACRED WATER FROM YOUR BAG...
...BUT THERE WAS A DEMON AT THE FOREST'S EDGE.
SORRY IT TOOK SO LONG.
!!
THIS FOREST IS MY PLAYGROUND. I KNOW EVERY INCH OF IT.
DID YOU THINK YOU COULD GET AWAY FROM ME?

.....?
HOW CUTE.
UGH.
WHAT'S THAT?!
WHAT THE HELL?
WHERE'D THE DEMON GO?
シャン!

OH, IT'S YOU.
WHAT DO YOU WANT, FEDELTA?
HEH, HEH, HEH ...
PERHAPS. I MUST ADMIT, SEEING THE ALL-POWERFUL SAABEL PUT OFF BY AN ELF THE SIZE OF A GRAPEFRUIT IS PRETTY AMUSING.
hmph
I GET IT NOW.
YOU LED THAT LITTLE GUY TO ME ON PURPOSE, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU WERE AFRAID OF A HARMLESS LITTLE FLY.
HOW PATHETIC.
...THE WHOLE BLOODY PLACE WILL BE COVERED IN FLOWERS BY MORNING.
I CAN'T TURN THEM INTO DOLLS, AND IF I LEAVE THEM FREE TO ROAM THE FOREST...
DAMN!
BLAST THAT FAERIE! SUCH WRETCHED CREATURES...
sigh...
CAN'T BE MENACING WITH PETUNIAS BLOOMING IN THE BACKGROUND.

WE'RE IN KAINALDIA ?!
NOT GOOD.
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THE PLACE. BUT HE ACTED LIKE IT WAS A BIG DEAL.
THAT'S WHAT HE SAID.
THE RETURN OF OUR LORD HAS STRENGTHENED ME.
...I'VE FELT SOMETHING GROWING INSIDE OF ME.
SOMETHING SO STRONG AND POWERFUL, I CAN SCARCELY CONTAIN IT.
EVEN SINCE.
...LORD NADIL WAS RESURRECTED ...
FEDELTA...
YOU KNOW VERY WELL THE FOREST IS MY TERRITORY.
YOU HAVE NO BUSINESS BEING HERE.
HOW DARE HE.
SPYING ON ME LIKE THAT.
I CAN HANDLE MYSELF.

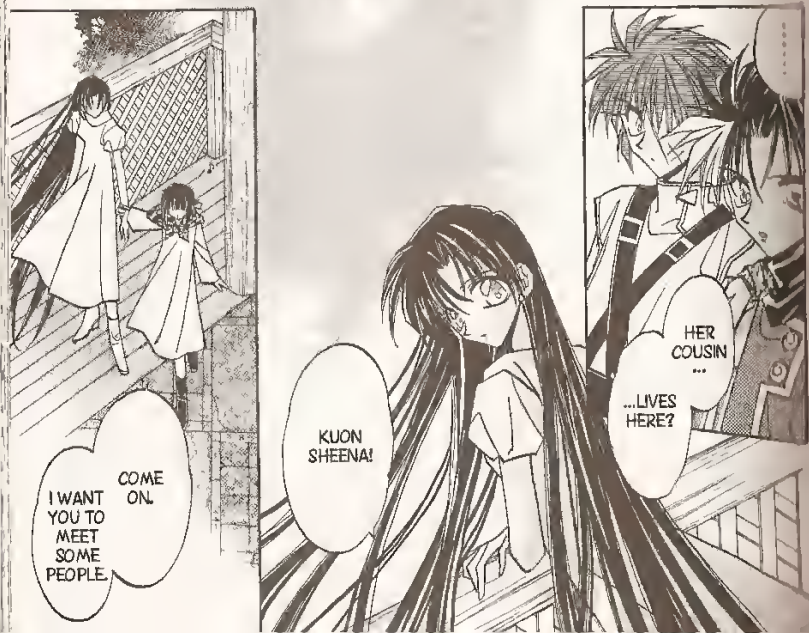
AWW, FORGET IT. I'M TIRED. LET'S GO TO BED.
Wait can you even fight with your fists? Wouldn't that be kicking ass?
YOU'RE RIGHT. I DON'T NEED A DRAGON TO KICK ASS.
ALL I NEED ARE MY FISTS.
You don't mess with the tribe, they mess with you!
WE'RE WORKING FOR LYKOULEON! WE'RE DRAGON TRIBE!
THE PROBLEM IS THAT THESE THINGS HAVEN'T SEEN WHAT WE CAN DO.
You must be on Lykouleon's patron, but you're not a dragon knight
UH, KITCHY
YOU'RE INSANE.
NOTHING SURPRISES ME ANYMORE.
Wow, except for the fact that we're still alive.
UH... I THINK SO.
BUT LOOK AROUND YOU...THE DEAD CAN COME BACK.
EVEN SO, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? DIDN'T THE DRAGON LORD KILL THAT GUY?
YEAH, I GOT THAT.
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING.
KAINALDIA IS IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT WORLD! IT'S IN THE DEMON REALM! THIS IS NADIL'S HOME!
...IF WE STAY HIDDEN FOR AWHILE, MAYBE THEY'LL FORGET ABOUT US.
...I DON'T KNOW WHY THERE ARE ALL THESE ZOMBIES AROUND AND WHY THEY'RE FOLLOWING US, BUT...
FIRST THING'S FIRST...
WE CAN'T STAY HERE ALL DAY!
WE'VE GOT TO COME UP WITH A PLAN!
WE'RE STILL ON A MISSION, REMEMBER? WE NEED TO GO GET OUR STUFF.
C'mon let's go!
Huh?
WHO'S RUNNING? WE CAN TAKE THEM. YOU FORGET I'M A PROFESSIONAL THIEF!
DON'T WORRY!
And you're the one who can't put pen down!
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT! DEAD EVIL THINGS ALL AROUND US, REMEMBER?

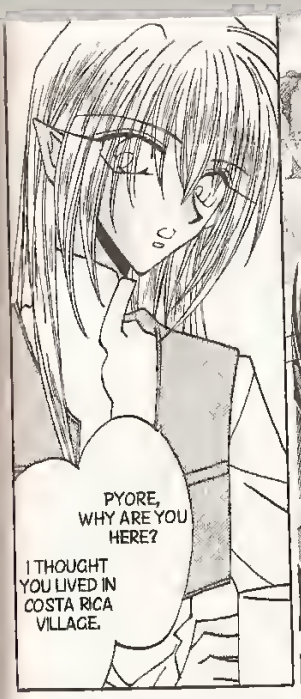
CESIA SAID YOU WERE LIKE A BABY. THAT YOU NEEDED CONSTANT ATTENTION AND LOVE.
I GUESS IT'S TRUE.
HEY, RATH...
SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOUR HEAD?
NAH, IT'S ALL AN ACT.
SHE'S HAPPIER IF SHE FEELS NEEDED. I JUST AIM TO PLEASE.
What's so funny?
IF YOU SAY SO...
classic denial.
YEAH, SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
ONCE WE FIND CESIA, I'M SURE I'LL FEEL BETTER.
THAT DEMON MUST BE FEEDING OFF OF NADIL'S POWER RIGHT NOW.
SO LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT...
...WE'RE LOOKING FOR A DEMON THAT COLLECTS CORPSES?
THAT'S WHAT TETHEUS SAID.
WELL, IF IT'S DEAD BODIES HE WANTS...
...HE'S COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE.

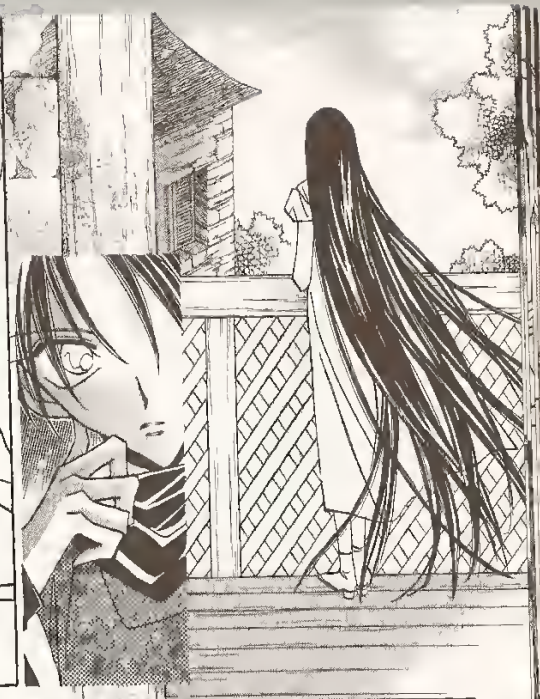
UH... EXCUSE ME. ARE YOU...
PYORE?!
Wow, aren't you a sight for sore eyes!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS! I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE YOU AGAIN!
SO DID WE.
YOU GUYS LOOK TALLER. DID YA GROW?
HEH, HEH...
NOPE.

WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAUSED IT.
AND QUITE FRANKLY, I DON'T CARE.
ALL I KNOW IS THAT MANY PEOPLE I KNEW WERE KILLED

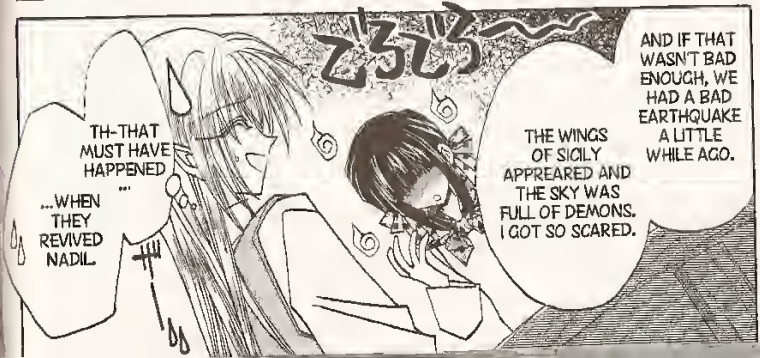
YOUR COUSIN?
SHE'S SICK AND NEEDED SOMEONE TO HELP OUT AROUND THE HOUSE.
I CAN'T LIVE NEAR THE DARK SWAMP ANYMORE, SO I'M STAYING WITH MY COUSIN.

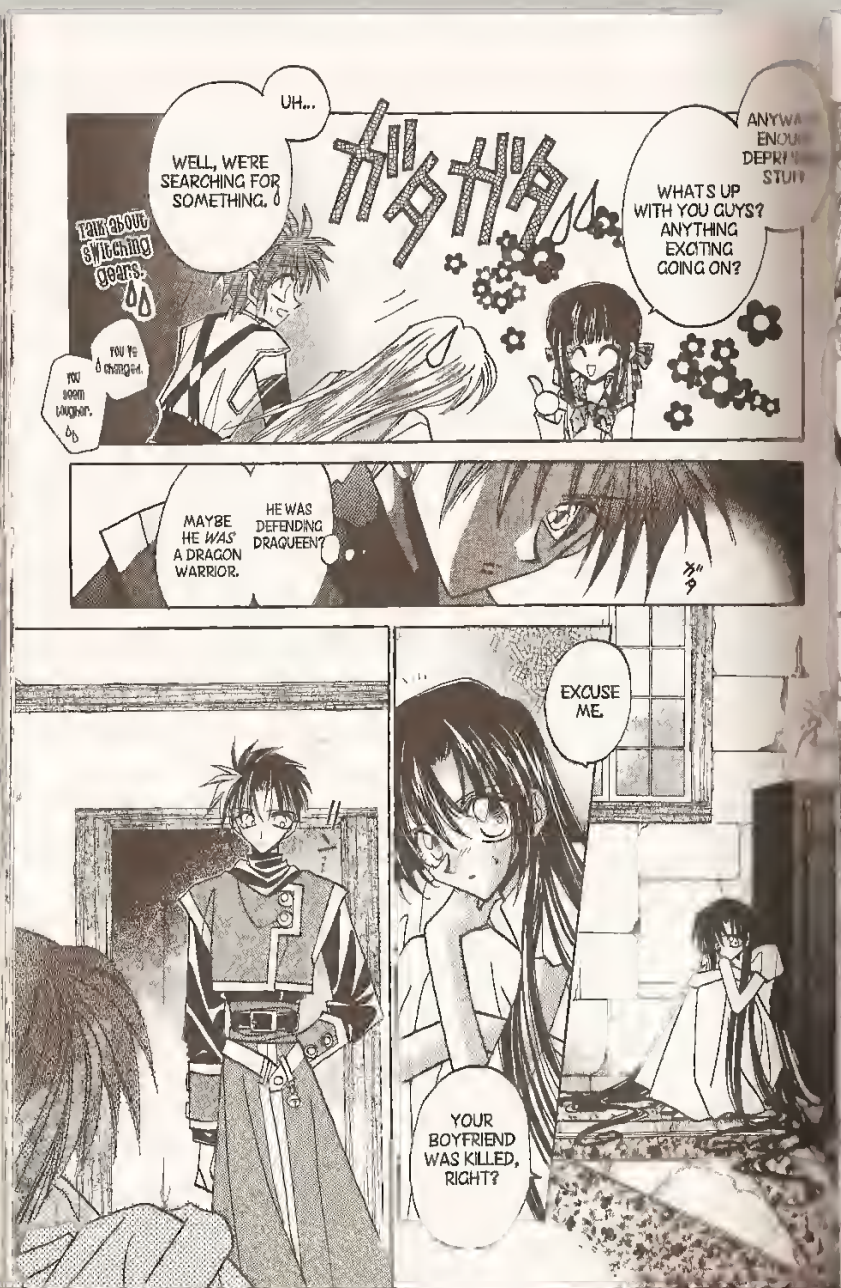

COME ON.
I WANT YOU TO MEET SOME PEOPLE.
KUON SHEENA!
HER COUSIN ...
...LIVES HERE?


PYORE, WHY ARE YOU HERE?
I THOUGHT YOU LIVED IN COSTA RICA VILLAGE.



THEY'RE EVERYWHERE NOW, BUT THE AREA AROUND THE DARK SWAMP IS THE WORST.
THANKS TO YOU THREE, THE EVIL MASTER OF THE SWAMP IS GONE, BUT LATELY TONS AND TONS OF DEMONS ARE GATHERING THERE.
WELL...
...REMEMBER THE DARK SWAMP NEAR THE VILLAGE?


ZZZZ~
TH-THAT MUST HAVE HAPPENED ...
...WHEN THEY REVIVED NADIL.
THE WINGS OF SICILY APPEARED AND THE SKY WAS FULL OF DEMONS. I GOT SO SCARED.
AND IF THAT WASN'T BAD ENOUGH, WE HAD A BAD EARTHQUAKE A LITTLE WHILE AGO.


UH...
WELL, WE'RE SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING.
Talk about switching gears.
You're changed.
You seem tougher.
ANYWAY, ENOUGH DEPRESSING STUFF
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU GUYS? ANYTHING EXCITING GOING ON?
MAYBE HE WAS A DRAGON WARRIOR.
HE WAS DEFENDING DRAQUEEN?
EXCUSE ME.
YOUR BOYFRIEND WAS KILLED, RIGHT?

HMM...
WHAT AN ODD NAME.
KUON SHEENA?
I'M SORRY... BUT I...
THIS IS MY COUSIN...
...KUON SHEENA. THAT'S ACTUALLY ALL HER FIRST NAME.
YOU HAVE TO EXCUSE MY COUSIN. HER BOYFRIEND DIED RIGHT AFTER HER FATHER PASSED AWAY.
I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS, BUT HE GOT KILLED WHILE TRYING TO FEND DRAQUEEN FROM A DEMON ATTACK.

HE'S GONE.
IF I WANT TO SEE HIM AGAIN, I HAVE TO FIND A CERTAIN DEMON.
I LIED.
THE TRUTH IS...
...MY BOYFRIEND WASN'T KILLED.
A DEMON?
THE DEMON THAT COLLECTS BODIES.
LET ME GUESS.
?
?
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
HOW COULD A DEMON THAT COLLECTS CORPSES HELP ME FIND SOMEONE WHO'S STILL ALIVE?
I'M NOT SURE.
I'VE HEARD TALK OF A DEMON IN THE SUBURBS.
WE HEARD THAT HE HAUNTS THIS PART OF TOWN.
A DEMON THAT COLLECTS DEAD BODIES?
!
A BLACK LAKE?
SUPPOSEDLY YOU CAN FIND HIM AROUND A BLACK LAKE.
KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT?
YEAH, IT'S PRETTY STRANGE...
...BECAUSE THERE IS NO BLACK LAKE IN THE SUBURBS.
BUT THE STORIES ARE TRUE. THEY HAVE TO BE...
...BECAUSE I'VE SEEN THE DEMON.

ANY OTHER DEMON STORIES?
I GOT TONS.
YOU HEARD THE GIRL.
TENTACLES?
OF COURSE!
WELL, I CAN SEE WE CAME TO THE RIGHT PLACE.
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF ALL THOSE OTHER DEMONS WHILE WE'RE AT IT. RATH WILL BE THRILLED.
YOU GUYS ARE SO COOL.
REALLY?
OH, BY THE WAY, WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT RATH GUY?
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR A WHILE.
DID HE DISAPPEAR AGAIN?
RATH?
HE WAS TOTALLY OUT OF CONTROL.
LAST TIME I SAW HIM HE WAS ALL JUMPY AND FULL OF ENERGY.
HE'S A LOT CALMER THAN I REMEMBER.

YOUR HEAD HANGS LOW.
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU MISS HER, DON'T YOU?
HOW DID YOU KNOW?
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE AS WELL, AREN'T YOU?
THAT'S RIGHT.
I SAW THIS CREEPY SHADOW THAT COULD ONLY BE THE DEMON. PEOPLE TEND TO AVOID DEAD BODIES, BUT THIS SHADOW WAS HOVERING OVER ONE. PLUS, IT HAD TENTACLES.
I SEE.
NOW IT'S GOT TENTACLES.
LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT. A DEMON THAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE THE ONE WE'RE LOOKING FOR SOMETIMES APPEARS IN THE SUBURBS.
AND THERE'S A RUMOR THAT HE APPEARS NEAR A BLACK LAKE, WHICH DOESN'T ACTUALLY EXIST.
IS SHE YOUR GIRLFRIEND?

THAT'S NOT NICE.
YOU TRYING TO DITCH ME?
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO DITCHED US.
I WAS JUST HAVING A LITTLE CHAT.
WITH WHO, KUON SHEENA?
THATZ!
RUNE!
YOU GUYS LOOKING FOR DEMONS?
YEP. IT SEEMS LIKE THE TOWN IS FULL OF THEM.
Let's see...
A DEMON THAT COLLECTS DEAD BODIES?

GOOD THING YOU TWO ARE THERE FOR HIM, RIGHT?
I SEE.
WELL, HE'S LIKE YOUR COUSIN. HE LOST SOMEONE IMPORTANT TO HIM...
...AND HE MISSES HER.
how terrible.
KUON SHEENA SAYS SHE'S GLAD THAT I'M WITH HER.
Are you all right?
That hurt!
DO YOU THINK RATH'S HAPPY TO HAVE US AROUND?
I'M SURE HE IS.
Let's find him.
Helping someone is a beautiful thing!
I BET RATH FEELS THE SAME WAY.
HE'S SO LUCKY TO HAVE YOU!

THAT'S THE BEST THING I'VE HEARD ALL DAY.
COME 'N GET IT!
DINNER'S READY!
I AGREE, AND THERE'S STILL NO SIGN OF THE ONE DEMON WE NEED.
I ADMIT, IT FEELS GOOD TO KILL DEMONS AGAIN, BUT THIS IS GETTING US NOWHERE.
I'm not my usual lazy self today.
Maybe we should've questioned them before killing them.
IT'S NOTHING, WATER.
?
WATER?
WHAT'S WRONG?

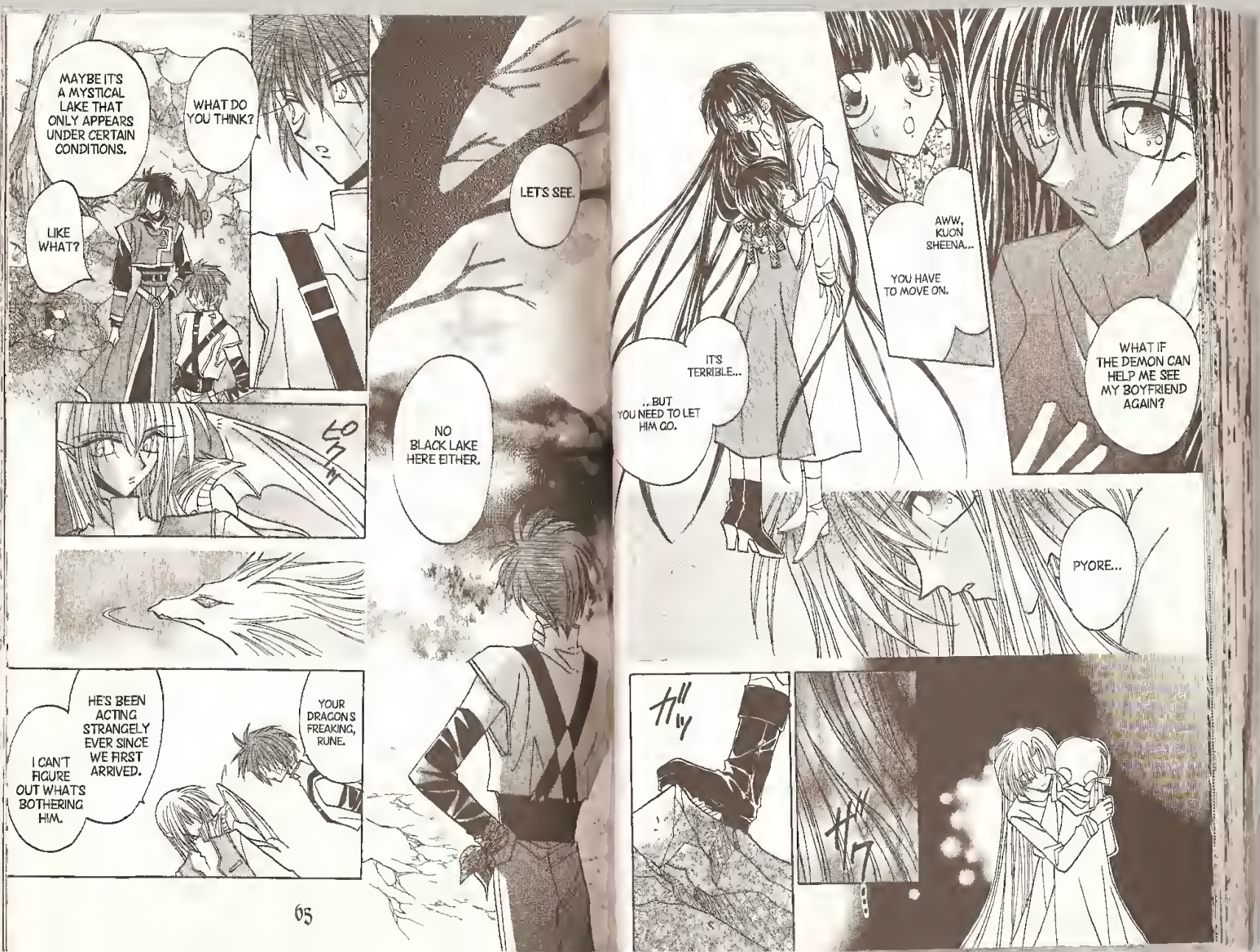
PYORE...
YES, KUON SHEENA?
YOU WANT ME TO START DINNER? I'LL MAKE EXTRA TONIGHT.
WE CAN'T SERVE ANYTHING TOO FANCY, BUT I'M SURE THEY'LL UNDERSTAND.
IT'S PROBABLY BEEN AWHILE SINCE THEY'VE HAD A REAL MEAL.
THIS IS GETTING RIDICULOUS. HOW MANY DOES THAT MAKE? TWENTY? THIRTY?

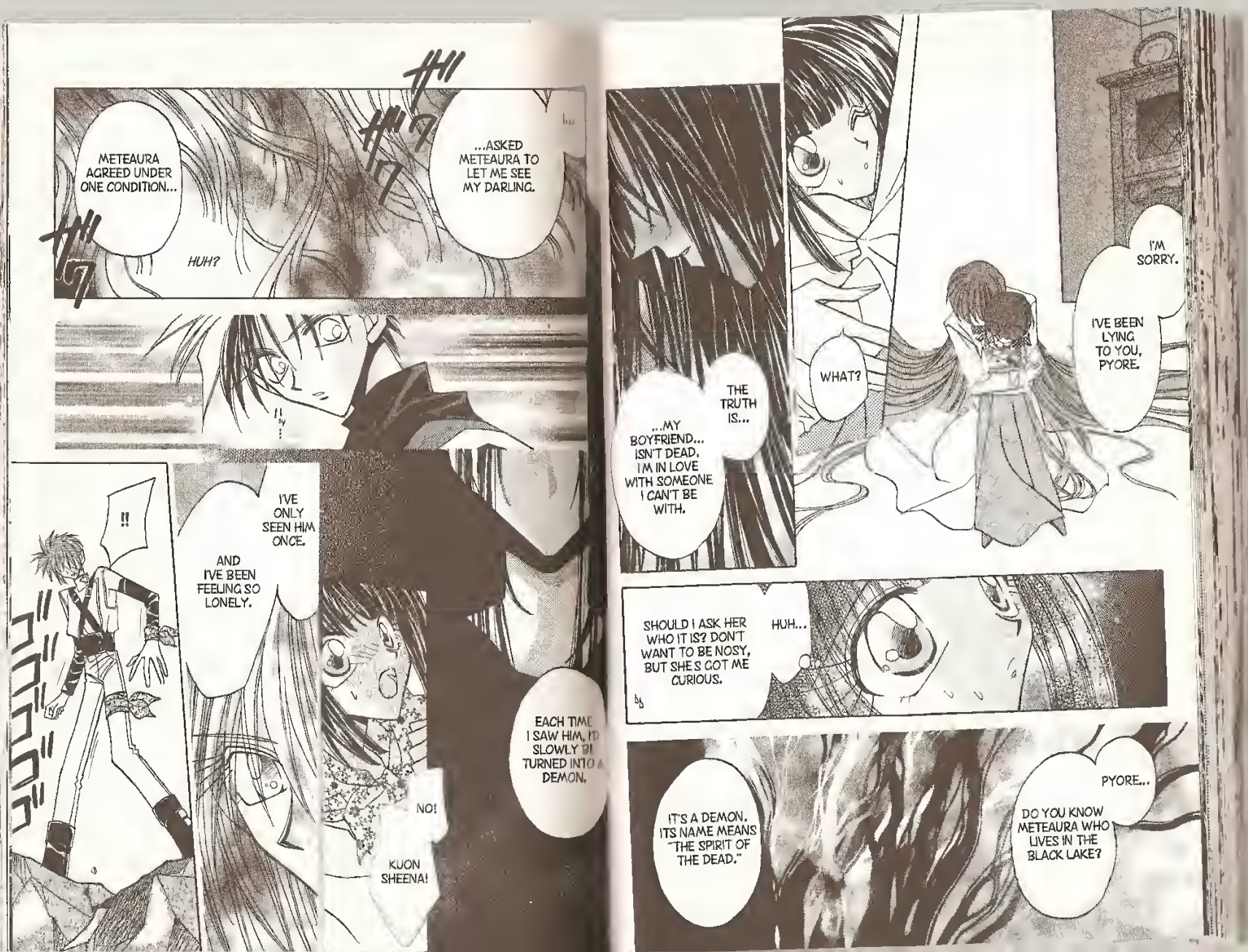
THINK ABOUT IT FOR AWHILE. I'M GOING TO BED.
WHY DON'T WE VISIT THE SUBURBS TOMORROW AND LOOK FOR THAT LAKE?
GOOD IDEA.
BUT HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO LOOK FOR SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T EVEN EXIST?

WE WERE WALKING AROUND TOWN WITH THE DRAGONS IN FULL VIEW.
TRUE..
BUT NO ONE WAS AROUND.
What's the big deal?
I FORGOT TO HIDE WATER FROM PYORE.
SHE KNOWS WHAT WE DO
OH...
OOPS.

Poke
NOTHING.
WHAT?
WELL, DUH!
YOU KNOW, EVER SINCE YOU GOT YOUR HEAD CHOPPED OFF, YOU'VE BEEN ACTING KINDA WEIRD.
What? You remember?
WELL, RATH USED TO ALWAYS LOOK UP AT THE SKY AND SIGH. HE DOESN'T DO THAT MUCH ANYMORE.
I WONDER...
...WHAT THAT MEANS.
HUH?
KUON SHEENA...
DID YA HEAR?
THEY SAY THE DEMON APPEARED LAST NIGHT.
YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL.
NO PLACE IS SAFE ANYMORE.

GOOD MORNING.
DID YA SLEEP WELL?
RATH...
YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT KUON SHEENA, AREN'T YOU?
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
YOU KEEP LOOKING OVER AT HER.
AND OU WENT ND HAD HAT CHAT STERDAY.
WELL, LOOK AT HER.
SHE ALWAYS HAS THAT FAR OFF LOOK.
You're reading too much into things. That's


MAYBE IT'S A MYSTICAL LAKE THAT ONLY APPEARS UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
LIKE WHAT?
LET'S SEE.
NO BLACK LAKE HERE EITHER.
I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT'S BOTHERING HIM.
HE'S BEEN ACTING STRANGELY EVER SINCE WE FIRST ARRIVED.
YOUR DRAGON'S FREAKING, RUNE.
AWW, KUON SHEENA...
YOU HAVE TO MOVE ON.
IT'S TERRIBLE...
...BUT YOU NEED TO LET HIM GO.
WHAT IF THE DEMON CAN HELP ME SEE MY BOYFRIEND AGAIN?
PYORE...


METEAURA AGREED UNDER ONE CONDITION...
HUH?
...ASKED METEAURA TO LET ME SEE MY DARLING.
!!
I'VE ONLY SEEN HIM ONCE.
AND I'VE BEEN FEELING SO LONELY.
EACH TIME I SAW HIM, I'D SLOWLY BE TURNED INTO A DEMON.
NO!
KUON SHEENA!
I'M SORRY.
I'VE BEEN LYING TO YOU, PYORE.
WHAT?
THE TRUTH IS...
...MY BOYFRIEND... ISN'T DEAD, I'M IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE I CAN'T BE WITH.
SHOULD I ASK HER WHO IT IS? DON'T WANT TO BE NOSY, BUT SHE'S GOT ME CURIOUS.
HUH...
PYORE...
DO YOU KNOW METEAURA WHO LIVES IN THE BLACK LAKE?
IT'S A DEMON. ITS NAME MEANS "THE SPIRIT OF THE DEAD."

LOOK!
IT'S THE BLACK LAKE!
IT'S THE DEMON!
SOMETHING'S COMING OUT OF IT.

AND I'LL SEE MY LOVER AGAIN SOMEDAY.
AS LONG AS YOU'RE WITH ME, I WON'T BE LONELY.
I STILL HAVE HOPE.
I WILL SEE LORD NADIL AGAIN.
PYORE ...
I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW GLAD I AM THAT YOU'RE HERE WITH ME. DON'T EVER LEAVE ME.
KUON SHEENA!!

IF I GO WITH HER...
...WILL I FINALLY BE ABLE TO SLEEP AT NIGHT AGAIN?
RATH!!
DON'T BE STUPID!
WE'RE ALIKE, YOU AND I.
WE'RE BOTH LONELY.
DON'T DO IT, RATH!
USE YOUR BRAIN.
WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN TO CESIA IF YOU GIVE UP NOW?
THAT'S RIGHT.
THINK OF SOMEONE OTHER THAN YOURSELF FOR ONCE!

NO.
IT'S KUON SHEENA...
YOU'RE THE KIND MAN WHO TRIED TO COMFORT ME.
COME AND I WILL WASH AWAY YOUR PAIN
...AND PYORE?!
!!

WILL YOU NOT...
.....
YOU'RE RIGHT.
...JOIN ME?
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL.
BUT YOU MUST LET PYORE GO.
YOU'VE ALREADY SUCKED THE LIFE OUT OF MOST OF THE VILLAGERS, INCLUDING YOUR FATHER.
HAVEN'T YOU DONE ENOUGH? WHEN DOES IT ALL END?
BUT...
YOU STILL WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE NADIL.

BUT THAT'S NORMAL FOR THEM, ISN'T IT?
WHAT'S NORMAL FOR THEM MAY NOT SEEM NORMAL TO US.
WE CAN'T USE OUR STANDARDS TO JUDGE THEM.
BUT...
...THEY'RE DEMONS. THEY DON'T HAVE ANY STANDARDS AT ALL.
WELL, DEMON OR NOT, I LOVE HIM.
I JUST WISHED HE LOVED ME TOO.
I DON'T LIKE HIM BECAUSE HE'S A DEMON.
I LOVE HIM IN SPITE OF THE FACT HE'S A DEMON.

IT'S TOO LATE.
I CAN'T STOP.
NADIL?
SHHH!
THIS GIRL IS NO LONGER HUMAN ANYMORE.
YOU'RE METEAURA!
YOU'RE THE DEMON WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!

WHAT YOU SAID JUST NOW...

...MADE ME HAPPY.

I NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT WAY BEFORE.

YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE TAKING A RISK, RIGHT?

YOU MIGHT DIE.

DEMONS DON'T VALUE THE SAME THINGS THAT WE DO.

I DON'T CARE.

I WANT HIM TO ACCEPT ME FOR WHO I AM.

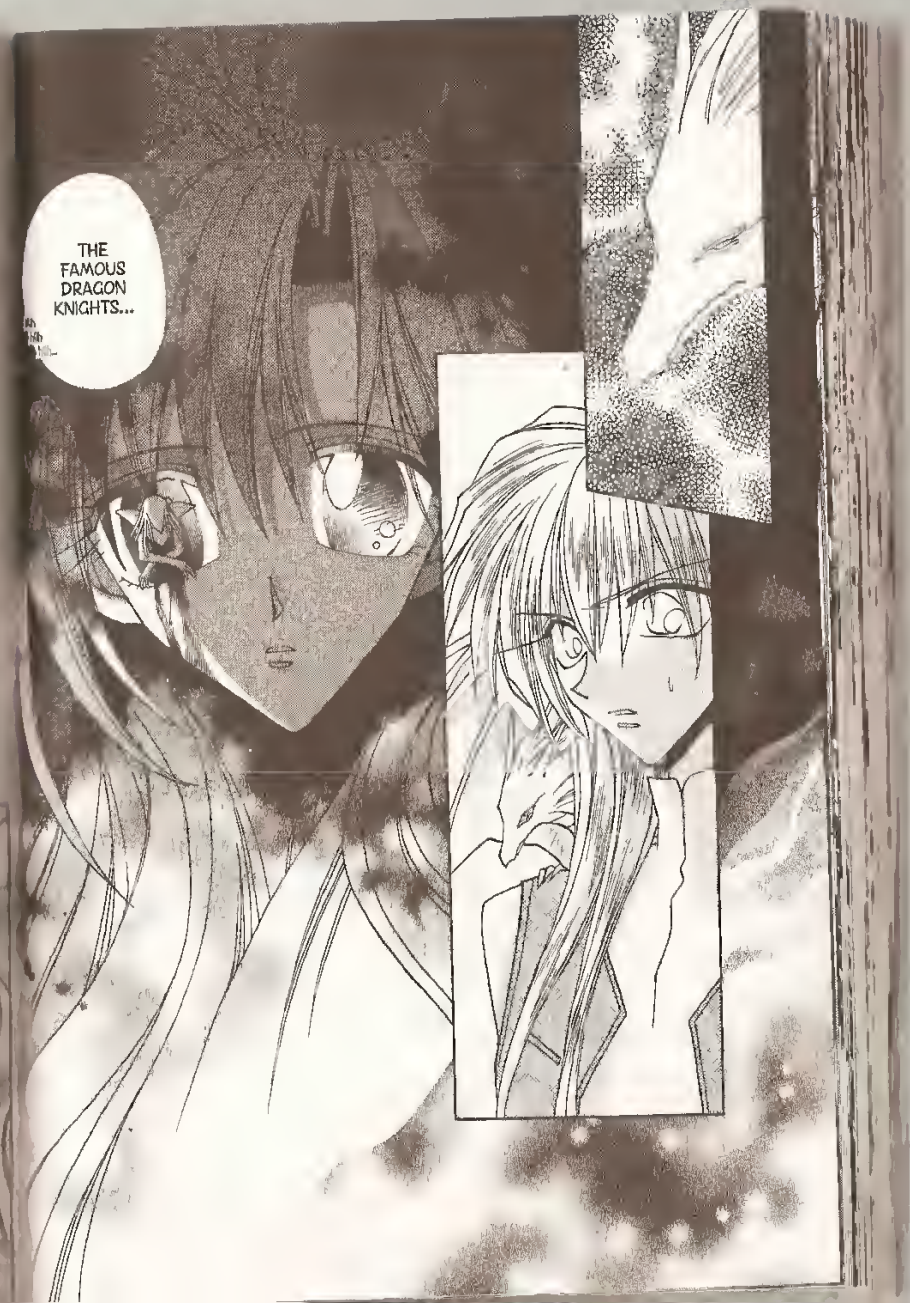
I SUPPOSE I'M BEING A LITTLE SELF-CENTERED...

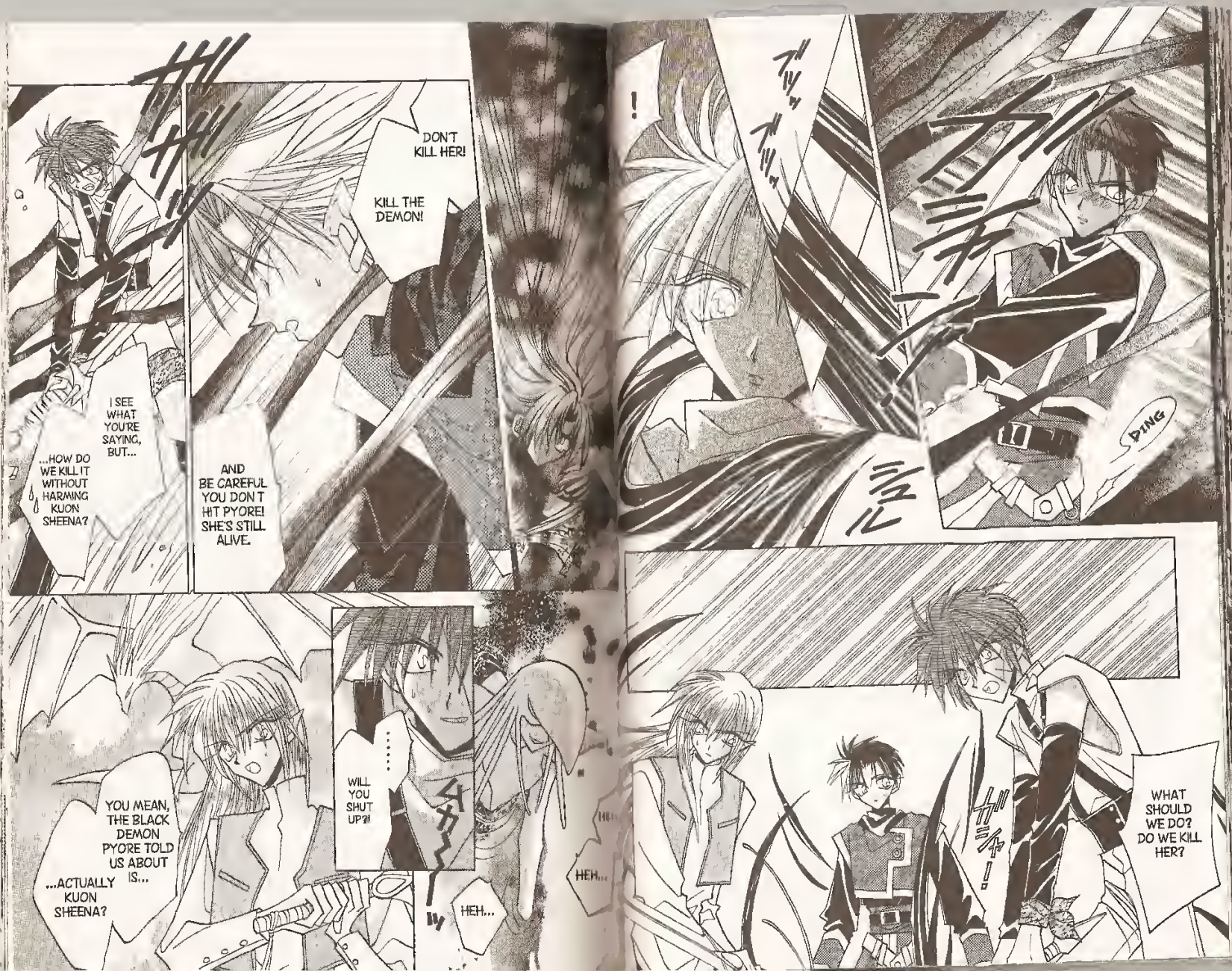
...BUT I CAN'T HELP IT.

I'VE FIGURED OUT A WAY TO SEE NADIL.

THE DEMON METEAURA WILL HELP ME. METEAURA WILL MAKE MY DREAMS COME TRUE.

SHE WOULD SACRIFICE ANYTHING TO FULFILL HER DREAMS.
YOU WERE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF, KUON SHEENA.
THE DEMONS HAVEN'T ACCEPTED YOU.
HEH, HEH, HEH...
KUON SHEENA!


THE FAMOUS DRAGON KNIGHTS...


DON'T KILL HER!
KILL THE DEMON!
I SEE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, BUT...
...HOW DO WE KILL IT WITHOUT HARMING KUON SHEENA?
AND BE CAREFUL YOU DON T HIT PYORE! SHE'S STILL ALIVE.
!
PING
WHAT SHOULD WE DO? DO WE KILL HER?
WILL YOU SHUT UP?!
HEH...
HEH...
YOU MEAN, THE BLACK DEMON PYORE TOLD US ABOUT IS...
...ACTUALLY KUON SHEENA?

I REALLY H
I'M WR
ABOUT TH
BUT I DON'T THINK I AM.
EITHER WAY...
...WE HAVE TO SAVE PYORE.
IF THAT DEMON LIVES IN A LAKE...
...IT'S A PRETTY FAIR GUESS THAT HE DOESN'T LIKE FIRE.

IT'S...
...THE DEMON THEY CALL THE SPIRIT OF THE DEAD, METEAURA!
NO.
IT'S NOT KUON SHEENA.
!
WHAT IF THAT'S THE DEMON WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR?
THEN WE CAN'T KILL IT EITHER!
IT MAKE SENSE NOW.
TAKES OVER A HUMAN'S BODY AND USES THAT PERSON TO COLLECT CORPSES.
IS THAT THE ONE THAT HAS NADIL'S POWER?!
THE DEMON THAT COLLECTS DEAD BODIES?
DAMMIT!

STOP IT, RATH! YOU'LL END UP BURNING PYORE.
BUT...
DON'T SWEAT IT.
WE CAN ALL TAKE HER ON TOGETHER.
IF SOMEONE CAN BLOCK HER HAIR, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE REST.
NO!
FIRE!!!
DON'T TAKE PYORE FROM ME.

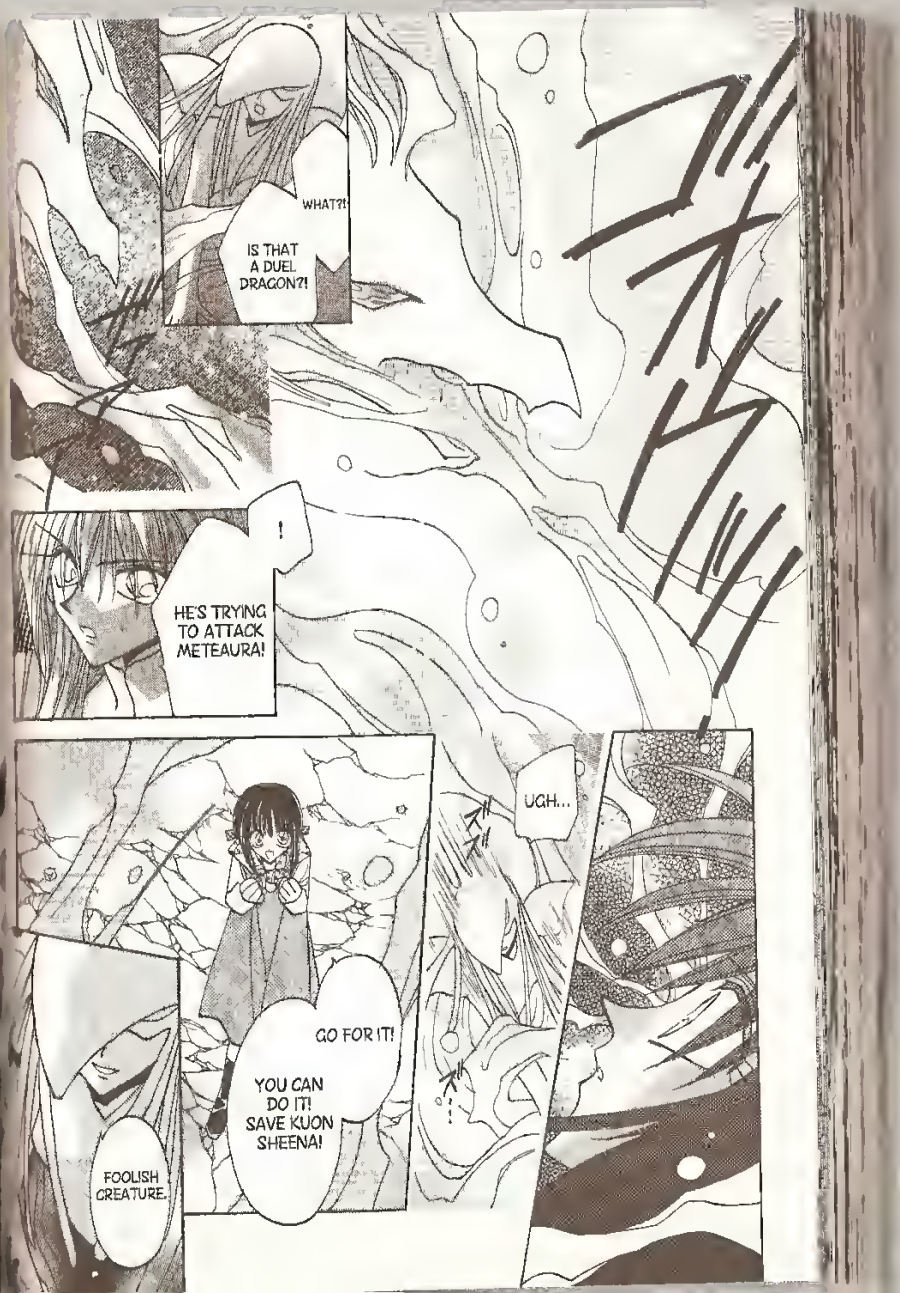
PATHETIC.
USELESS.
YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
WHAT'S THAT?!
WATER!

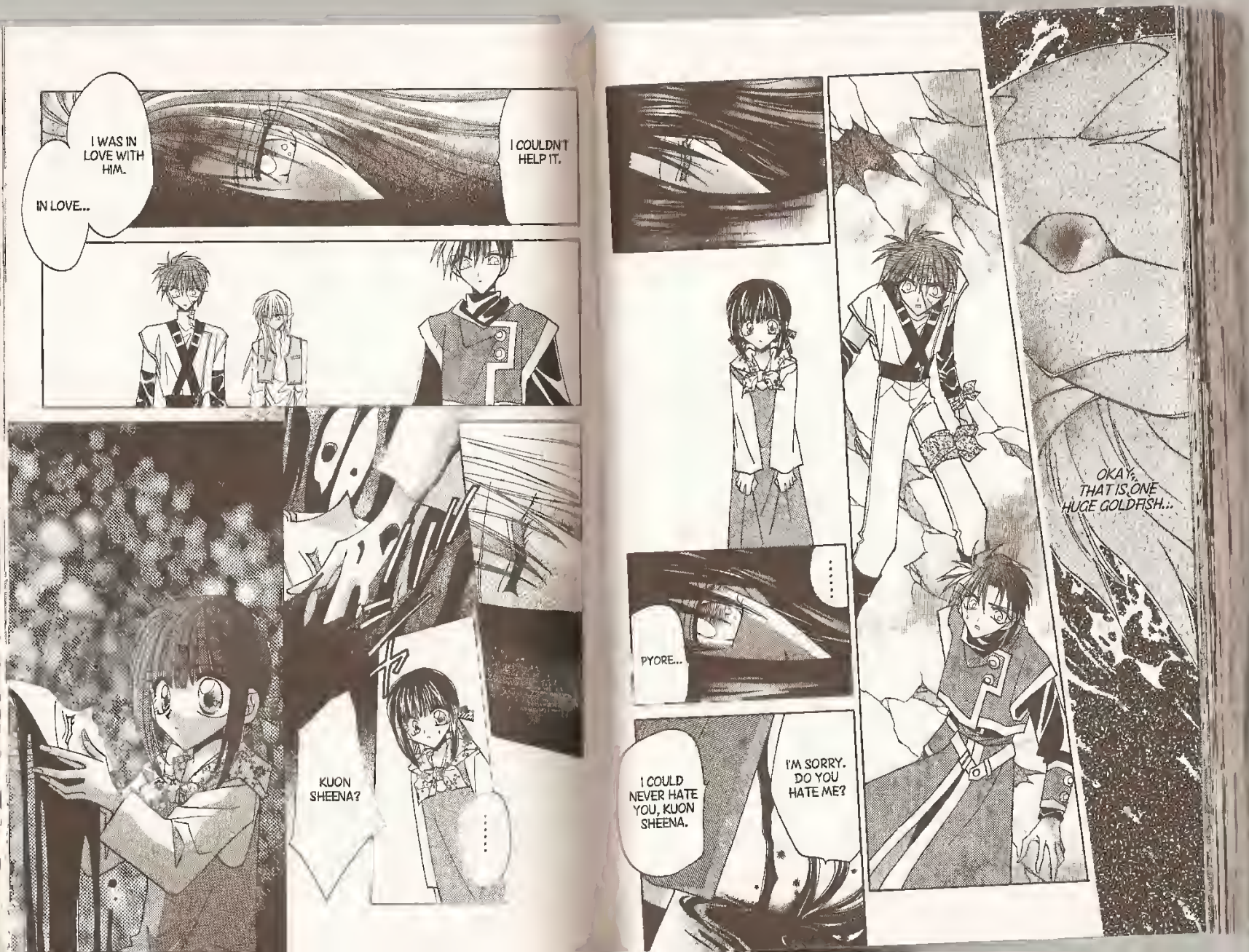
NO!
KUON SHEENA!
PYORE! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!
SHE WON'T HURT ME.
KUON SHEENA!
KUON SHEENA!

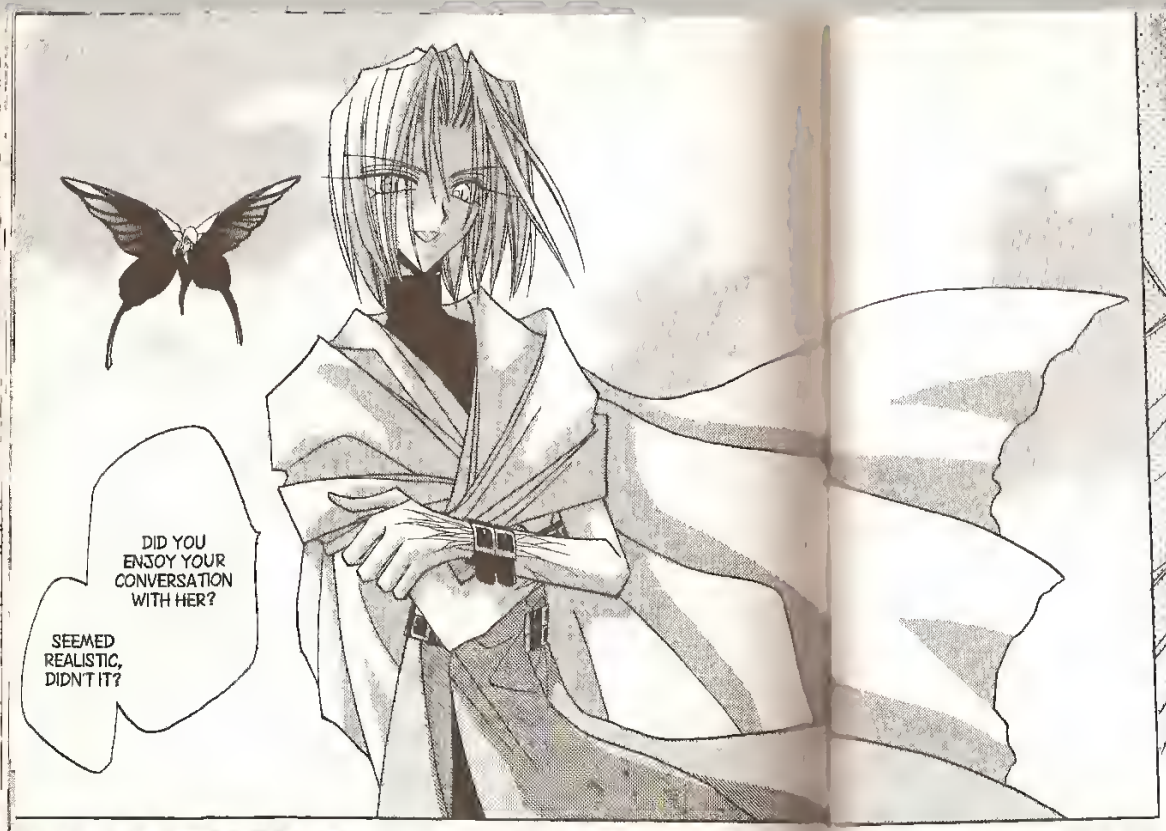
PYORE!
WAKE UP.
Phew!
HUH?
WHAT?

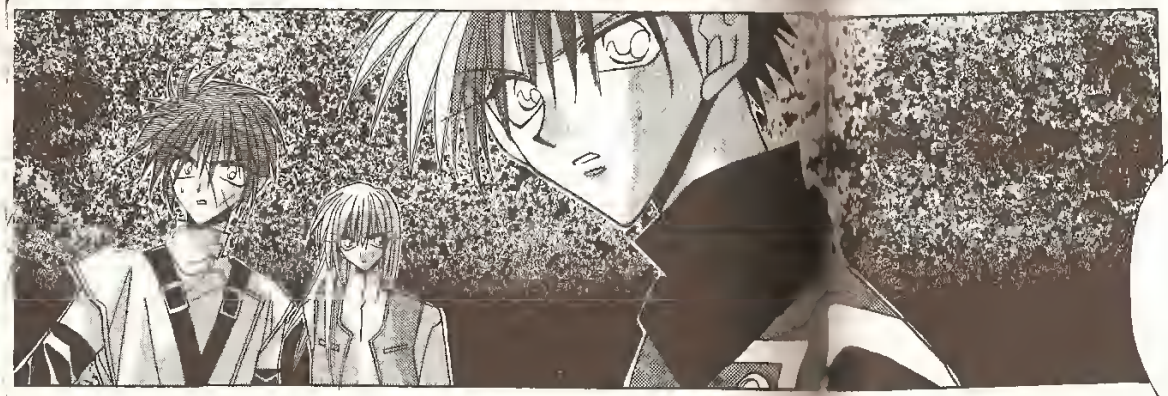
WHAT?!
?!
RUNE..
LOOK!
HE'S GOTTEN BIGGER.
BUT HOW?
HOW DID HE DO THAT?!
WATER?!
I CAN'T BE WITH YOU IF YOU STAY LIKE THAT.
I'M NOT MAD AT YOU...
...COME BACK TO ME...
PYORE...
...BACK.
COME...
BESIDES, IF THAT'S THE DEMON WE'RE LOOKING FOR...
WE'RE TRYING NOT TO.
YOU CAN'T KILL KUON SHEENA!
PLEASE!
...WE CAN'T KILL IT.
POSSESSED?
KUON SHEENA IS POSSESSED BY A DEMON.
UNLESS WE CAN GET RID OF IT, SHE WON'T BE COMING BACK.

NOT QUITE.
I NEVER SAID THAT SHE WAS A DEMON.
THINK OF HER AS A DOORWAY.
ONCE WE GET RID OF YOU, KUON SHEENA WILL NO LONGER BE A DEMON.
CAN'T YOU TELL?
SHE'S NO LONGER HUMAN.
AND TO PASS THROUGH A DOORWAY..
...THERE MUST BE NOTHING INSIDE.
ゴッ!!

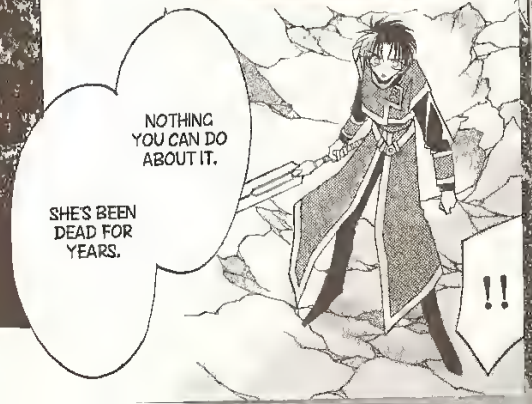

WHAT?!
IS THAT A DUEL DRAGON?!
!
HE'S TRYING TO ATTACK METEAURA!
UGH...
GO FOR IT!
YOU CAN DO IT! SAVE KUON SHEENA!
FOOLISH CREATURE.

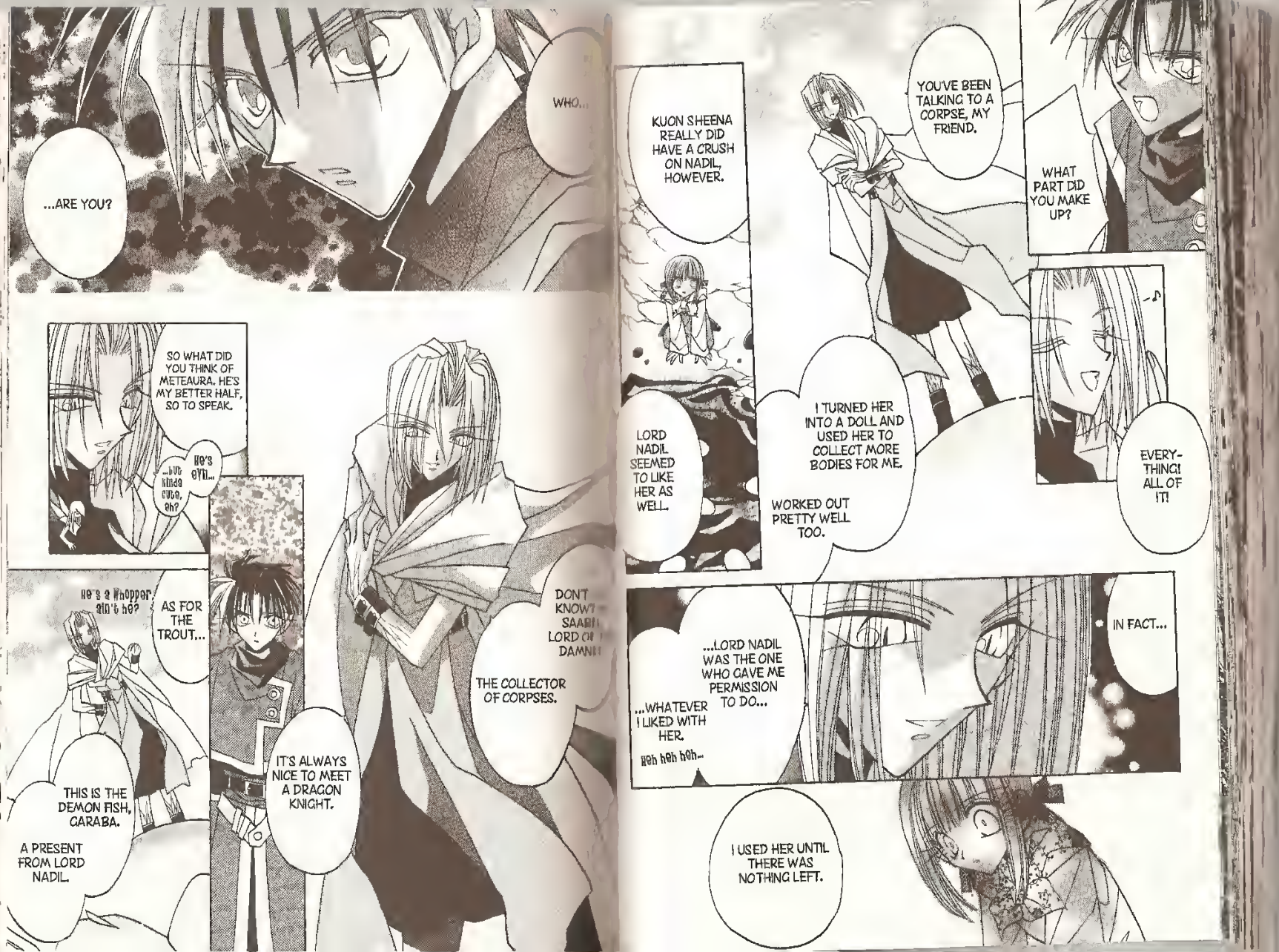

I WAS IN LOVE WITH HIM.
IN LOVE...
I COULDN'T HELP IT.
KUON SHEENA?
.....
PYORE..
.....
I'M SORRY. DO YOU HATE ME?
I COULD NEVER HATE YOU, KUON SHEENA.
OKAY... THAT IS ONE HUGE GOLDFISH...

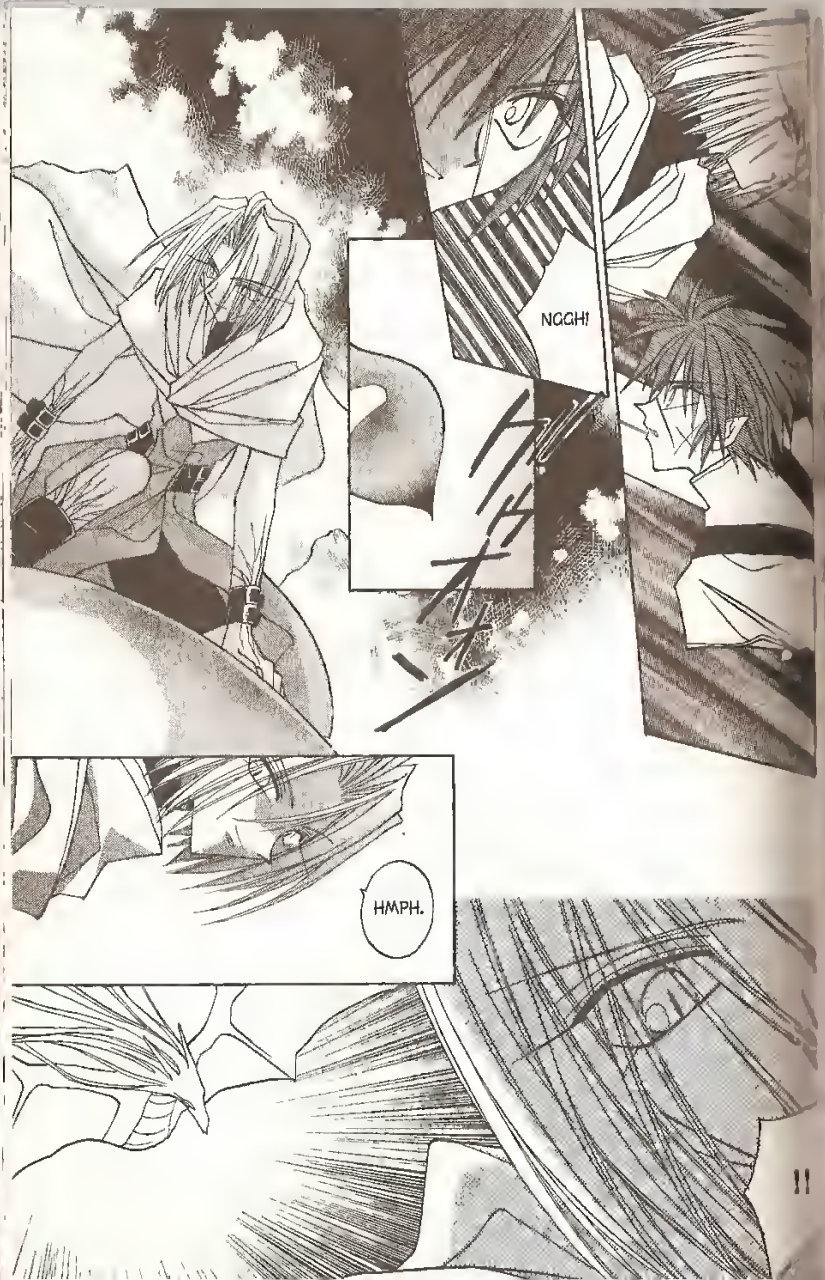

DID YOU ENJOY YOUR CONVERSATION WITH HER?
SEEMED REALISTIC, DIDN'T IT?



HEH HEH HEH...
HA HA HA HA HA!
AAAAAAH!


NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT.
SHE'S BEEN DEAD FOR YEARS.
!!


WHO...
...ARE YOU?
SO WHAT DID YOU THINK OF METEAURA. HE'S MY BETTER HALF, SO TO SPEAK.
He's evil...
...but kinda cute, eh?
He's a whopper, ain't he?
AS FOR THE TROUT...
THIS IS THE DEMON FISH, CARABA.
A PRESENT FROM LORD NADIL.
IT'S ALWAYS NICE TO MEET A DRAGON KNIGHT.
DON'T KNOW? SAARI LORD OF DAMN!!
THE COLLECTOR OF CORPSES.
KUON SHEENA REALLY DID HAVE A CRUSH ON NADIL, HOWEVER.
LORD NADIL SEEMED TO LIKE HER AS WELL.
YOU'VE BEEN TALKING TO A CORPSE, MY FRIEND.
WHAT PART DID YOU MAKE UP?
I TURNED HER INTO A DOLL AND USED HER TO COLLECT MORE BODIES FOR ME.
WORKED OUT PRETTY WELL TOO.
EVERY-THING! ALL OF IT!
...LORD NADIL WAS THE ONE WHO GAVE ME PERMISSION TO DO...
...WHATEVER I LIKED WITH HER.
Heh heh heh...
IN FACT...
I USED HER UNTIL THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT.


NGGH!
HMPH.

NOW THEN...
...ANY MORE QUESTIONS?
DON'T BE SHY. YOU CAN ASK ME ANYTHING.
HOW ABOUT THIS?
IS IT TRUE THAT YOU HAVE NADIL'S DEMON POWERS?
WELL, AREN'T WE DIRECT?
WHY DO YOU ASK?
CUT THE CRAP. YOU SAID YOU'D ANSWER ANYTHING.
SO START ANSWERING, PUNK!

PATHETIC.
USELESS.
SO THIS IS ONE OF THE MIGHTY ELEMENTAL DRAGONS
THE WATER DRAGON. RIGHT?
WATER!

WATER!!
A DUEL DRAGON!

HOWEVER, I MAY BE WILLING TO MAKE AN EXCEPTION...
...IN EXCHANGE FOR THIS WATER DRAGON.

WHAT...
HA HA HA HA HA!
THEN THE TWO OF YOU SHOULD GET ALONG JUST FINE...
...SAABEL!
!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
US BEING AT WAR AND ALL.
AS A MEMBER OF NADIL'S ARMY, IT'S MY DUTY TO FIGHT THE DRAGON TRIBE.

WHAT?!

YOU CAN'T DO THAT!

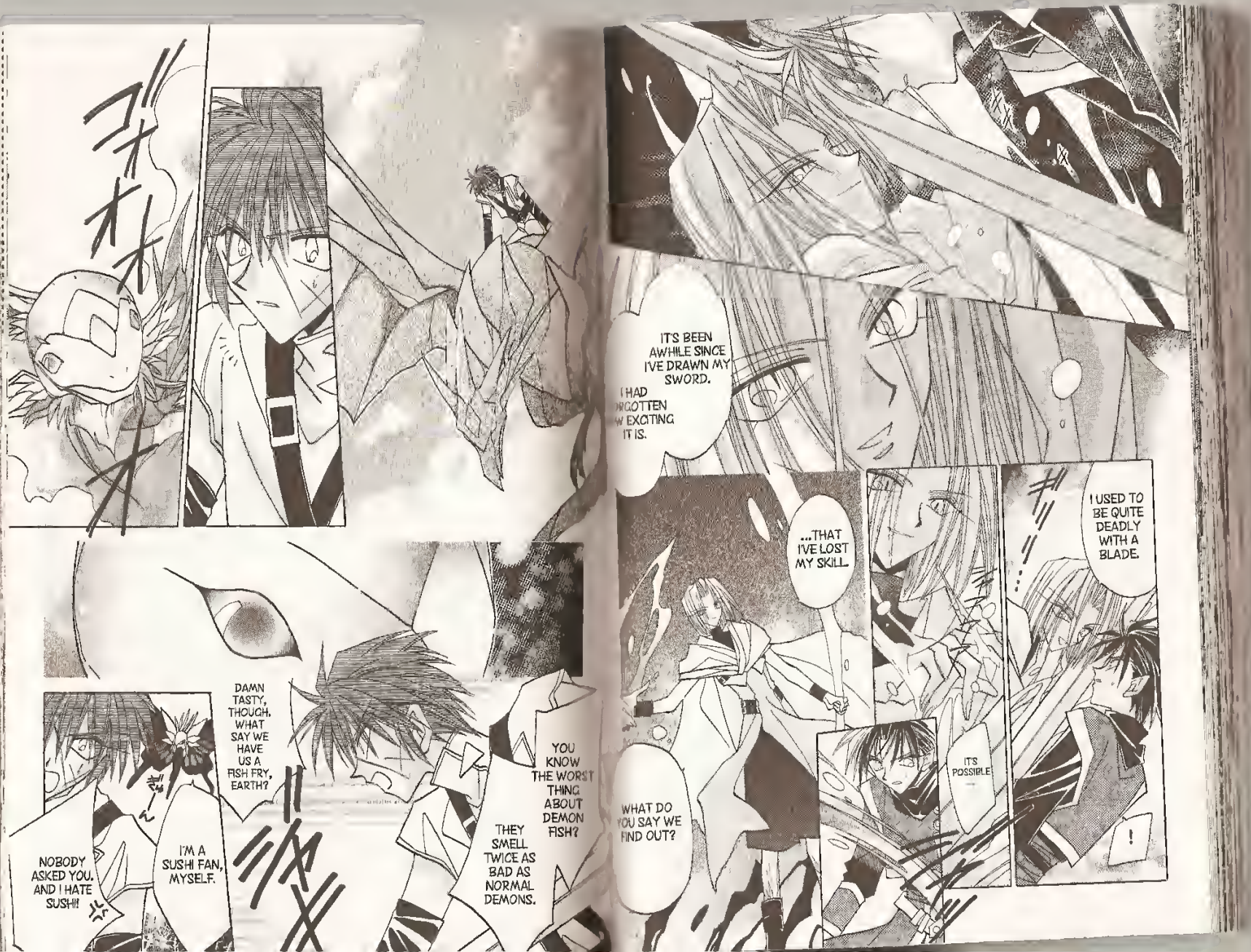
YOU'RE RIGHT. FORGET THE EXCHANGE, I'LL JUST STEAL IT.

!!

HE'D MAKE A GREAT PET. AND A POWERFUL ONE.

AFTER THEM!
HURRY!
!!
EARTH!!
WE SHOULD...
FIRE!!

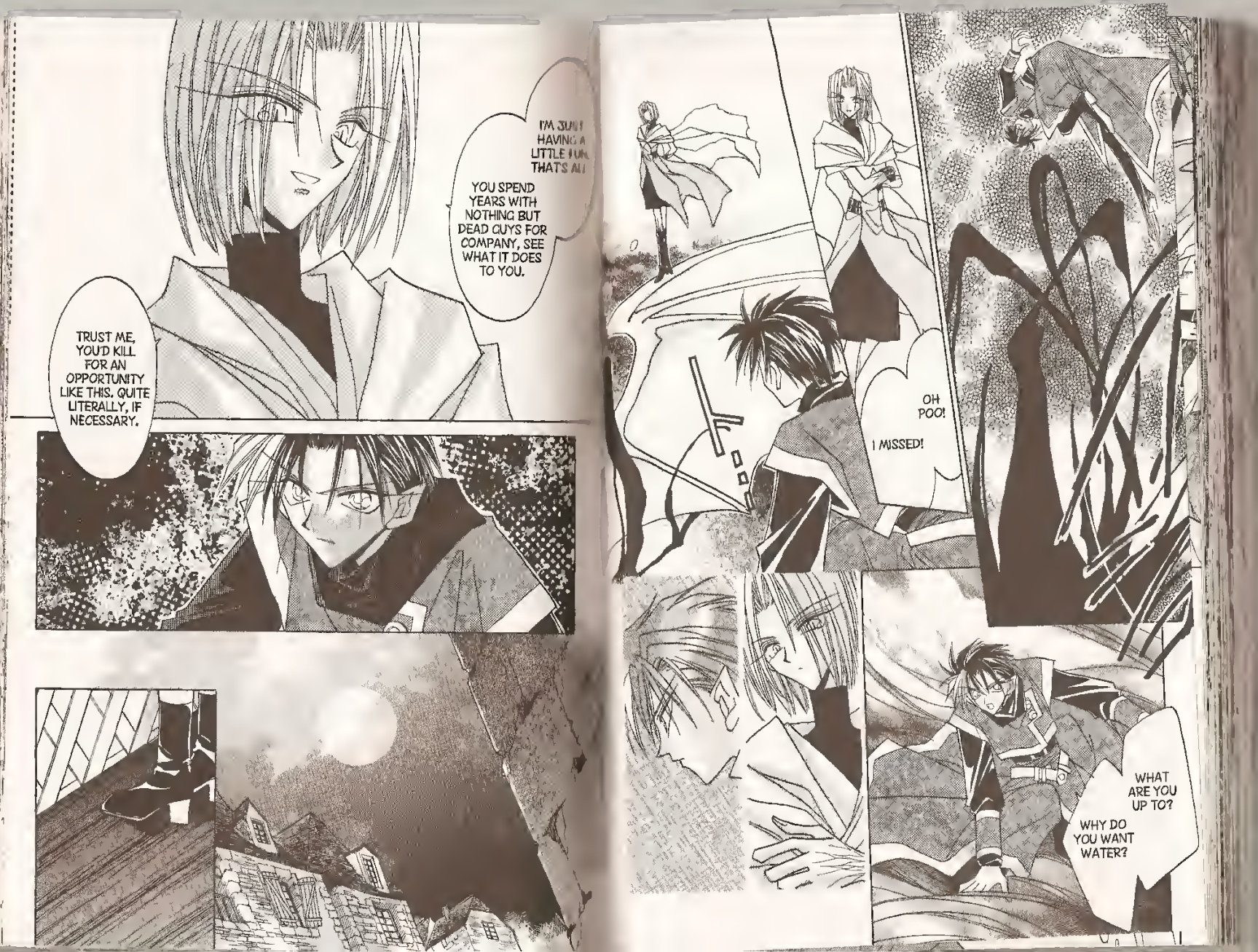
HEH, HEH...
HA HA HA HA!
FIRE!
CLOSE IN ON HIM!
THAT IDIOT. OUT OF ALL THE DRAGONS HE COULD STEAL, HE CHOOSES WATER?
WHAT DOES HE WANT WITH HIM?
AHA HA HA HA HA!
PUTTTTTTTGGG!
RIGHT!
WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK!!
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS WAITING FOR?! FOLLOW THEM!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF PYORE!!
THIS IS ABSOLUTE PERFECTION!
OH, YES...
EXCELLENT.


ITS BEEN AWHILE SINCE I'VE DRAWN MY SWORD.
I HAD FORGOTTEN HOW EXCITING IT IS.
...THAT I'VE LOST MY SKILL.
I USED TO BE QUITE DEADLY WITH A BLADE.
ITS POSSIBLE
!
WHAT DO YOU SAY WE FIND OUT?
YOU KNOW THE WORST THING ABOUT DEMON FISH?
THEY SMELL TWICE AS BAD AS NORMAL DEMONS.
DAMN TASTY, THOUGH. WHAT SAY WE HAVE US A FISH FRY, EARTH?
I'M A SUSHI FAN, MYSELF.
NOBODY ASKED YOU, AND I HATE SUSHI!

HEH, HEH, HEH...
UGH!
WHAT THE HELL?!
?!
VEER LEFT, EARTH!
I said left, not straight ahead!
EARTH?!
ARE YOU NUTS?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
EARTH! DAMMIT! HOLD UP!

HA!
I CALL SARAMU, THE SPIRIT OF FIRE!
LET'S SEE... EITHER YOUR DRAGON HAS WASABI FOR LUNCH, OR YOU MUST BE THE FIRE DRAGON KNIGHT.
SARAMU HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE DRAGON CLAN!
UH-OH...

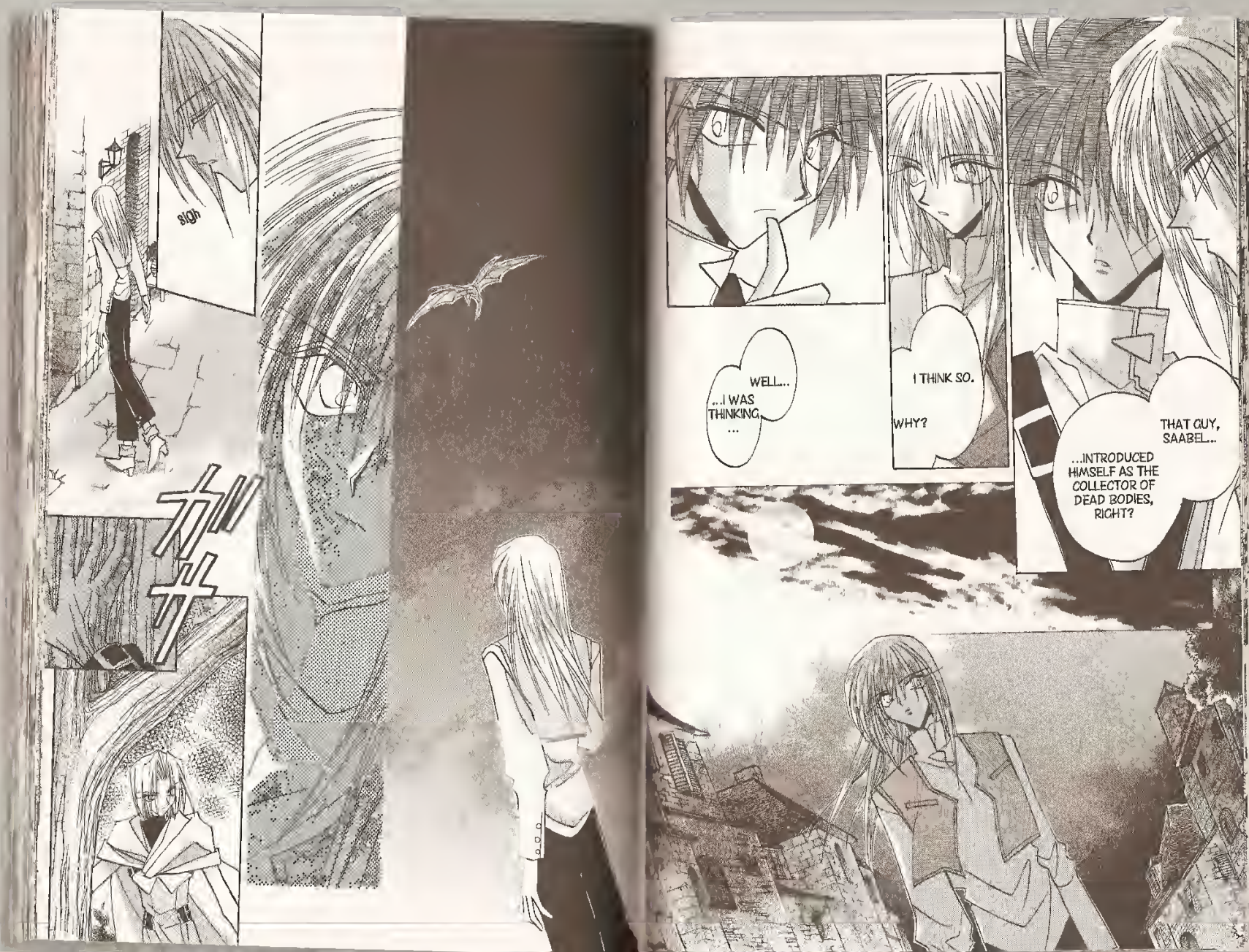
?!
NOT BAD! CONSIDER ME IMPRESSED!


I'M JUST HAVING A LITTLE FUN, THAT'S ALL.
YOU SPEND YEARS WITH NOTHING BUT DEAD GUYS FOR COMPANY, SEE WHAT IT DOES TO YOU.
TRUST ME, YOU'D KILL FOR AN OPPORTUNITY LIKE THIS. QUITE LITERALLY, IF NECESSARY.
OH POO!
I MISSED!
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
WHY DO YOU WANT WATER?

I ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT SHE WAS LOOKING AT.
BUT NOW...
...I KNOW.
EVERY NIGHT, I'D COME OUT HERE TO FIND KUON SHEENA STARING OFF INTO SPACE.
YES...
MR. RUNE...
I DON'T WANT TO STAY HERE ANYMORE.

THERE'S NO WAY THIS DEMON'S GETTING AWAY.
WELL, NOT ALONE
I LEFT HIM WITH SOMETHING.
SHE SHOULDN'T STAY HERE.
WE SHOULD...
WHAT WAS IT?
HUH?
RUNE?
YEAH?
I WANNA ASK YOU SOMETHING.
...TAKE PYORE TO THE DRAGON CASTLE.
after we eat, of course

THATZ!
WHERE'S RATH?
WHAT HAPPENED?
RATH'S OKAY. HE'S GOT EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL.
DON'T WORRY.
YOU LEFT HIM?!


SIGH
WELL...
...I WAS THINKING, ...
I THINK SO.
WHY?
THAT GUY, SAABEL...
...INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS THE COLLECTOR OF DEAD BODIES, RIGHT?

LET ME GO!
SHUT UP!
Aaaack!
Damn you! When I get out of here, I'll curse you and take over your body! Agh! What did I just step in?
← Meteaura
I'M GETTING A MIGRAINE.
BUT WOU IT HAVE W THAT DIFFI TO HAV GAGGED LITTLE BAS WHILE HI AT IT?
THEY MUST BE PLANNING A TRADE. METEAURA FOR THE WATER DRAGON.
DAMN. I'D HAVE NO PROBLEM LETTING METEAURA ROT...
...WERE IT NOT FOR THE FACT THAT HE HOLDS HALF MY POWER.
WITHOUT HIM, I'M HALF THE MAN I USED TO BE. CLICHÉD, BUT UNFORTUNATELY TRUE.
such a nuisance...
WHAT'S WRONG?
DO YOU MISS YOUR OLD MASTER?

WELL, THATZ DID SAY THIS THING WAS SPECIAL.
IT SURE CAME IN HANDY.
SURPRISING, CONSIDERING WHO IT CAME FROM.
SHIT!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I LET HIM GET THE UPPER HAND.

AND BOTH TIMES I'VE BEEN DEFEATED. THAT JUST WON'T DO.
WHICH MAKES ALL THE RECENT EXCITEMENT ...
...THAT MUCH MORE PUZZLING.
STILL, I SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN. IT'S NOT A TOTAL WASTE. I HAVE YOU TO TAKE HOME, AFTER ALL.
IT'S ANNOYING ENOUGH HAVING TO DEAL WITH THE BUG.
YOU HUSH.
Fine. I'm not talking to you.
Are you all right, master?

WELL, WATER, IT APPEARS WE'RE IN QUITE THE PREDICAMENT HERE. I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING. IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY COME LOOKING FOR YOU.
THE DRAGON OF WATER, EH? AND THEY CALL YOU 'WATER'? THAT'S ORIGINAL.
WELL, I CAN'T COMPLAIN TOO MUCH. I WANTED EXCITEMENT.
THIS PLACE IS UNDER THE COMPLETE PROTECTION OF LORD NADIL. CONVENIENT, YES... BUT BLOODY BORING.
YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO BE ON YOUR BEST BEHAVIOR. NEVER STEP OUT OF LINE. SOMETIMES I FORGET WHETHER I'M A DEMON OR A MONK.
ANY SUGGESTIONS, DRAGON?

IT'S SETTLED.
METEAURA WAS A GIFT FROM LORD NADIL. I MUST GET HIM BACK. NOT TO MENTION THAT HE'S GREAT FOR GETTING CHICKS.
TOMO?
BUT I REALLY WANNA TAKE YOU BACK WITH ME!
AWW, TOMO.
He looks mad! What are we going to do?!
FOOLISH DRAGON KNIGHTS!
PRAY YOU DIE TONIGHT, BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING TO SUFFER TOMORROW!
!

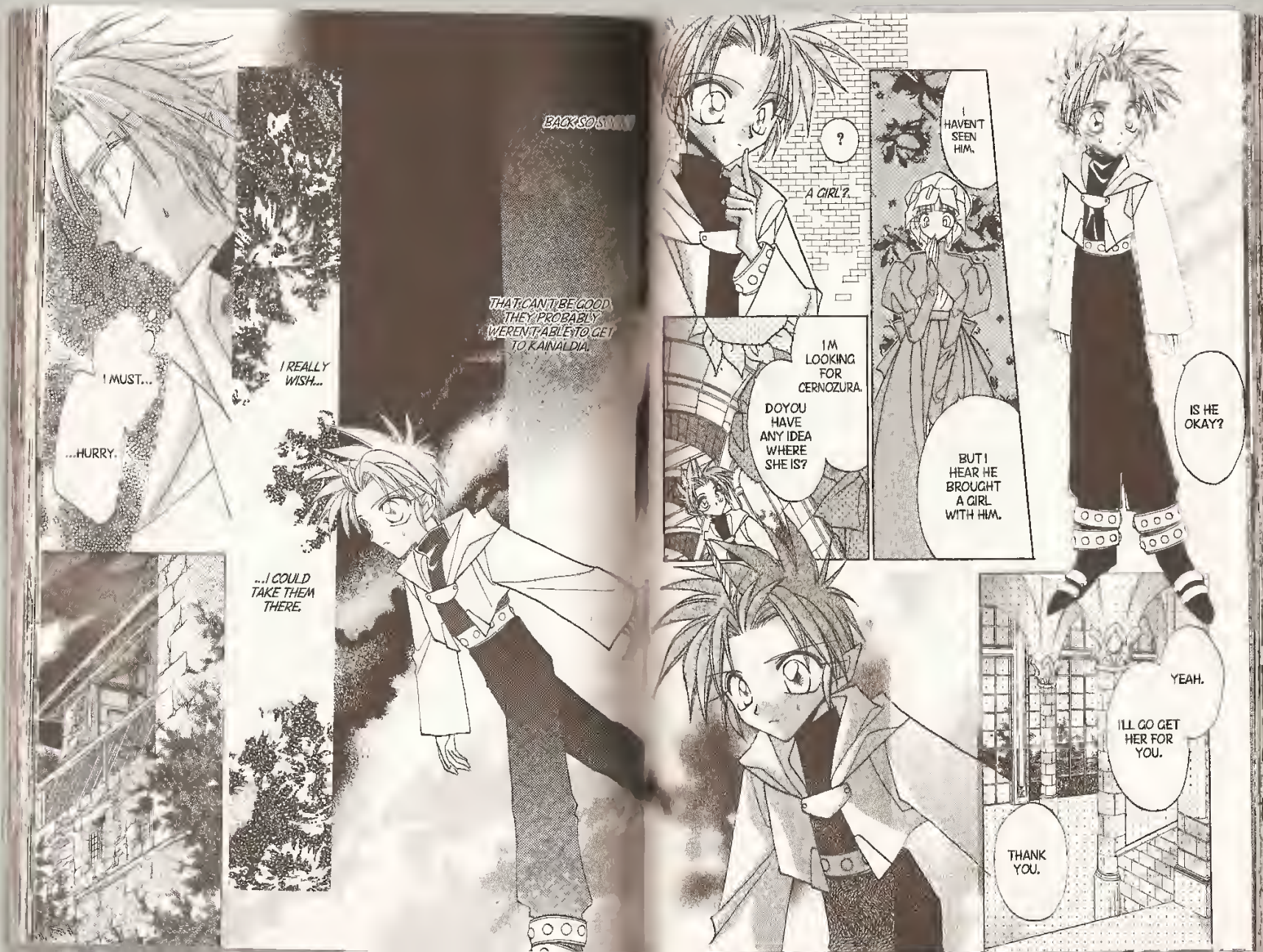
AH!
I COULD HAVE SWORN HE CAME DOWN HERE.
WHERE IS HE HIDING?!
I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THE LOOK ON FEDELTA'S FACE WHEN HE SEES YOU.
SHOULD BE CLASSIC.
I CAN'T ALLOW THE DRAGON CLAN INTO THE FOREIGN WORLD.
ESPECIALLY NOT WHEN LORD NADIL'S AT THE CASTLE.
WHO AM I KIDDING?
FEDELTA'S NEVER GOING TO SEE YOU.
IT'S HIM!

HMPH.
SO THAT'S WHERE HE'S BEEN HIDING.
ENOUGH PLANNING. LET'S HEAD BACK!
Which means we should have a plan.
BUT AS LONG AS WE HAVE HIM, THAT GUY WILL DEFINITELY BE BACK.
AS LONG AS WE HAVE HIM, THE DEMON WILL COME TO US.
RIGHT NOW, THIS LITTLE SQUIRT IS OUR ACE.
He's sure made enough noise
PROBABLY.
Do you think this little guy saw us away?
Bastard
WELL, WATER, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I'M BEAT.
BESIDES, I SHOULD REST UP FOR TOMORROW.
DAMN! DID HE SEE ME?

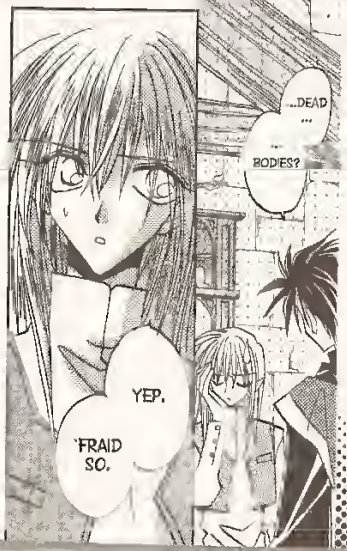
IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL HERE.
WHERE...
...AM I?

.....
ARE YOU SERIOUS, THATZ?
I DON'T KNOW.
IT JUST DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT.

REALLY?
THATZ IS BACK?


I MUST...
...HURRY.
I REALLY WISH...
BACK SO SOON?
THAT CAN'T BE GOOD. THEY PROBABLY WEREN'T ABLE TO GET TO KAINALDIA.
...I COULD TAKE THEM THERE.
?
A GIRL?
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM.
BUT I HEAR HE BROUGHT A GIRL WITH HIM.
I'M LOOKING FOR CERNOZURA.
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE SHE IS?
IS HE OKAY?
YEAH.
I'LL GO GET HER FOR YOU.
THANK YOU.

.....
WHY SO JUMPY?
sigh
WHAT ARE YOU DOING BACK HERE?
OH...
IT'S JUST YOU, RATH.


...DEAD ... ... BODIES?
YEP.
'FRAID SO.

ARE YOU... ... COLLECTING ...

NO ONE'S HERE.

HUH?

AAAAAHH!

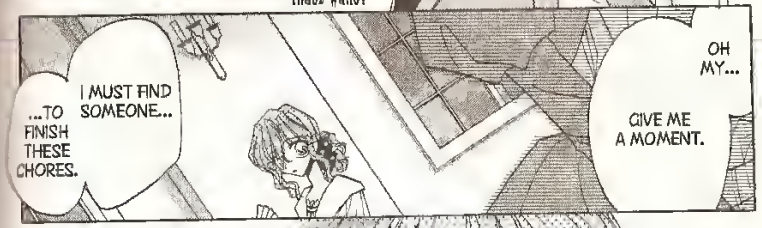
はた
FIGURES.
TYPICAL THATZ...
HE'S IN DRA-QUEEN ?
HEY! WHAT HAPPENED WITH SAABEL?
GONE? JUST LIKE THAT?
WHERE DID HE GO?!
say again...
HE'S GONE
ACTLY! AND
MON WHO
OLLECTS
ORPSES...
THAT'S SAABEL'S JOB, ISN'T IT?
...HE'LL HAVE TO COME TO US.
...IF WE GET THEM ALL FIRST...
SO WHERE'S PYORE?
HE THOUGHT IT WAS TOO DANGEROUS HERE FOR HER AND I AGREED.
THATZ TOOK PYORE AND EARTH BACK TO DRAQUEEN.
HOW'D YOU GUESS?
THATZ CAME UP WITH THIS PLAN, DIDN'T HE?
It really wasn't hard.

I TAILED HIM FOR AWHILE, BUT HE SAW ME.
THANKS IN NO SMALL PART TO BUTTERFLY BRAIN HERE.
HOY!
SMACK
SINCE WE HAVE HIS PAL, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE SAABEL COMES LOOKING FOR US.
HE SHOULD TURN UP SOONER OR LATER. WHEN HE DOES, WE'D BETTER BE READY.
BUTTERFLY BRAIN?
YEAH, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS METEAURA, THE SPIRIT OF THE DEAD!
THATZ GAVE HIM TO ME. THOUGHT HE MIGHT PROVE USEFUL.
YOU WANNA HOLD IT FOR AWHILE?
UM... NO THANKS. MAYBE LATER.
SO THAT'S WHAT THATZ MEANT.
I WONDER HOW HE CAUGHT IT.
HE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A BUTTERFLY NET.
A NET?!
don't ask me why he thought to bring one.

I DON'T REALLY KNOW. I HAVEN'T SEEN HER YET.
WHO'S THE GIRL?
HE MUST HAVE SAVED HER.
THATZ IS THAT KIND OF PERSON.
HE SAVED ME ONCE.
THAT'S WHAT I WAS THINKING.

I'VE BEEN THINKING OF LEAVING.
DELTE...

I SHOULD TURN YOU...
A GIRL?
THATZ HAS A GIRL WITH HIM.
THAT'S WHY I WAS TOLD TO GET YOU.
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT. HE MUST BE HUNGRY.
I'LL SEE WHAT'S IN THE KITCHEN.
I DON'T THINK THAT'S WHAT HE WANTED, CERNOZURA.
OH, LORD THATZ IS BACK?
Actually, What does Thatz Want?


...TO FINISH THESE CHORES.
I MUST FIND SOMEONE...
OH MY...
GIVE ME A MOMENT.

This needs to be washed...
NO PROBLEM.
THANKS, DELTE. YOU'RE TOO KIND.
REALLY?
GO AHEAD. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THEM.

ARE YOU GOING TO SAY GOODBYE TO THATZ?
NAH.
YOU WANT TO...
...BRING THE WIND STAFF TO CESIA, RIGHT?
BESIDES ...
...I WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE HIM, RIGHT?
PERHAPS YOU'LL SEE HIM IN KAINALDIA.
I HOPE SO.

GOOD LUCK!
THATZ!
THANKS.
WAIT A SECOND.
BEFORE YOU LEAVE, I'D LIKE AN UPDATE OF YOUR CURRENT STATUS.

FEATHERS!
WINGS?!
PLEASE TAKE CARE OF HER FOR ME.
WELL, I SHOULD GET BACK TO THE BOYS. TOO MUCH TO DO.

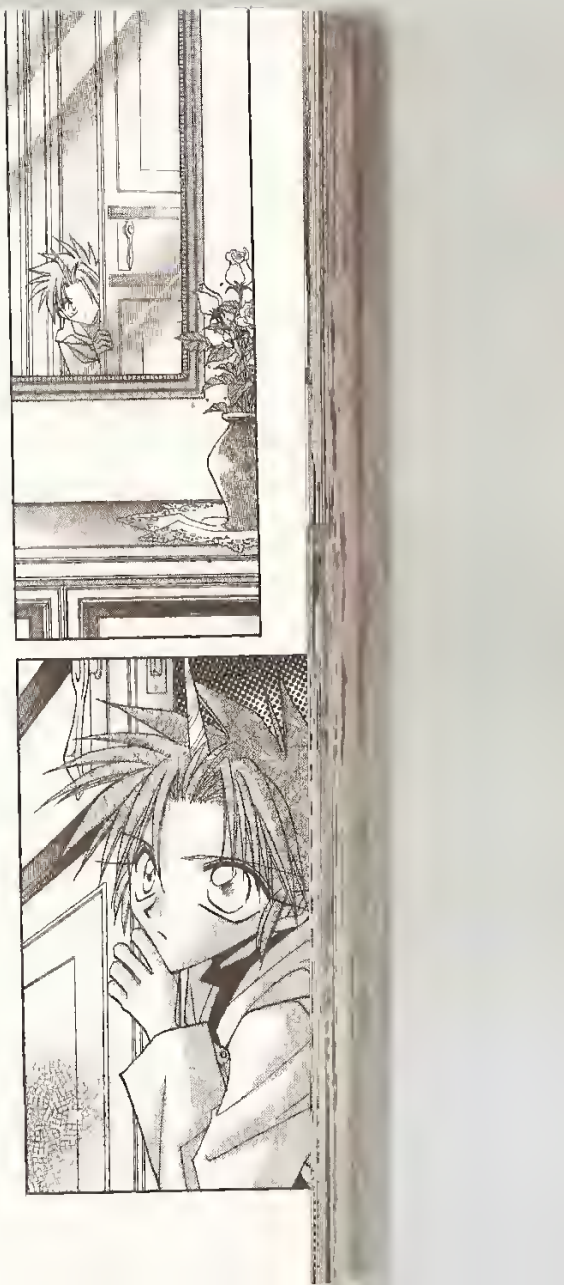
WHAT?!!!
H-HEY, STOP SHAKING ME!
YOU'RE GONNA MAKE ME DROP MY FOOD.
HOW COULD YOU LET THAT HAPPEN?! ANSWER ME, THATZ!
DON'T WORRY! WE'LL GET HIM BACK.
sigh...
HECK, I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF RATH AND RUNE HAVE ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF IT.
ugh.

I WOULD SAY THAT'S SOMETHING TO REPORT.
YEAH, MAYBE.
WE MAY HAVE FOUND THE DEMON THAT TETHEUS WAS TALKING ABOUT.
NOTHING MUCH TO REPORT, I'M AFRAID.
UM...
UPDATE.. NO PROB.
I'm starved!
Hey!
Food
Gorazura prepared it for you
That was quick.
OH YEAH! HE ALSO STOLE WATER.
HOW TOUGH IS THE DEMON?
PRETTY TOUGH. HE KNEW THAT WE WERE DRAGON KNIGHTS.
THAT'S ABOUT IT, THOUGH.
WE'RE STILL FIGURING OUT OUR NEXT MOVE.

I SEE. YOU DON'T WANT ME TO KNOW WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON. FINE BY ME.
I'LL JUST TAKE MY FOOD AND RUN.
YOU JUST TAKE CARE OF LORD LYKOULEON AND THE REST OF THE CASTLE.
DON'T WORRY. WE HAVE EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL.
THAT...
...SHOULD BE MORE THAN ENOUGH TO KEEP YOU BUSY.
...LEAVE THE AFFAIRS OF THE CASTLE TO ME.
LIKE YOU SAID...
LET'S NOT PLAY DUMB, RUWALK.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

BESIDES, I'M NOT ALLOWED TO TAKE ANYONE ELSE THROUGH THE MIRROR.
YOU OKAY?
YEAH. I'M JUST A BIT ANEMIC.

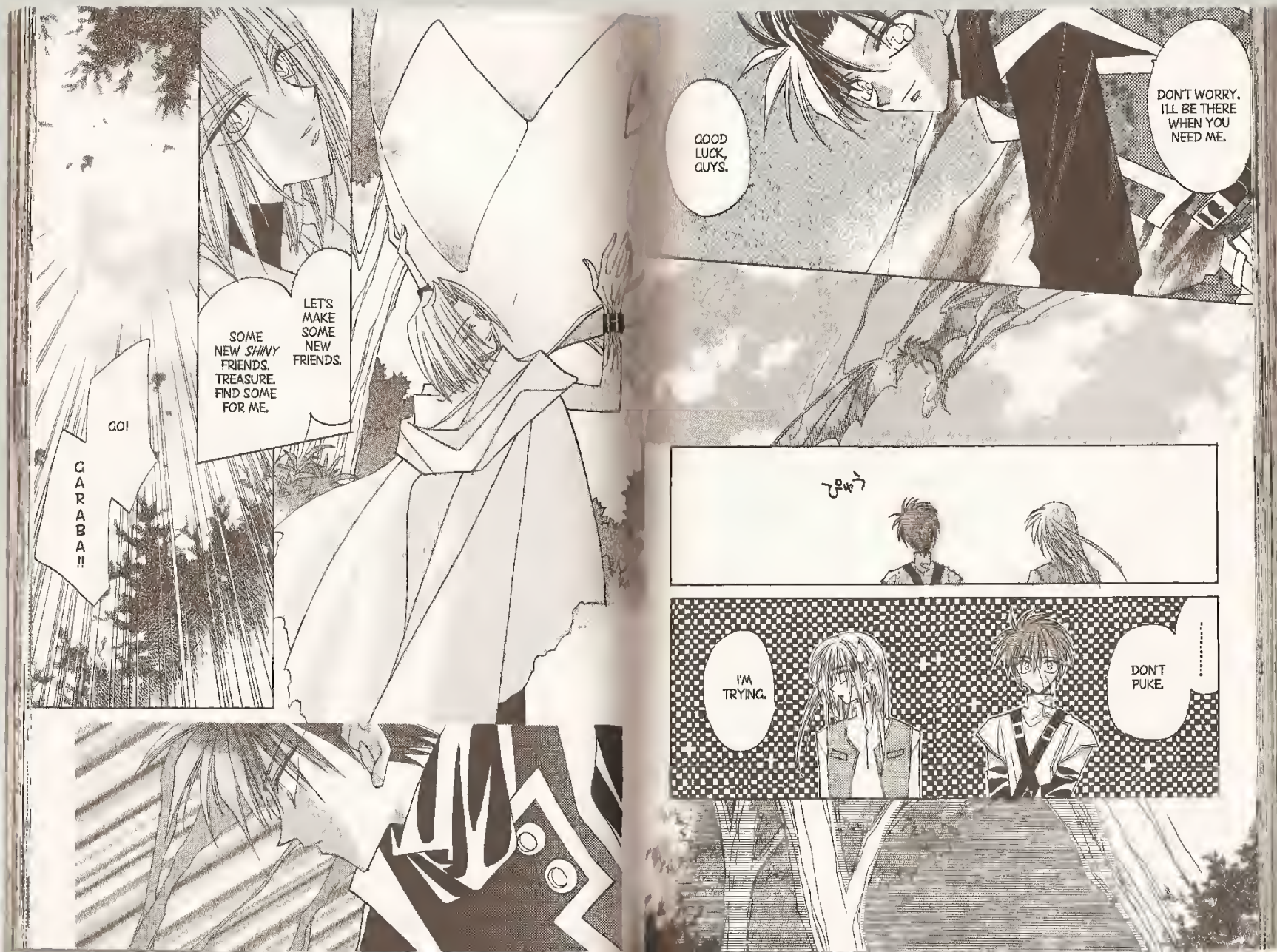
I...
...MAY NOT HAVE THE POWER OF NADIL.
...BUT I DO HAVE AN ALL-ACCESS PASS TO THE DEMON REALM.
THEY'D PROBABLY KILL ME IF THEY FOUND OUT I CAN GO STRAIGHT THROUGH THE MIRROR AND SEE THE GATEKEEPER OF KAINALDIA ANY OLD TIME.
I CAN'T LET THE OTHERS KNOW, THOUGH.
AFTER ALL, THEY'RE TRYING SO HARD TO GET TO THE OTHER SIDE.

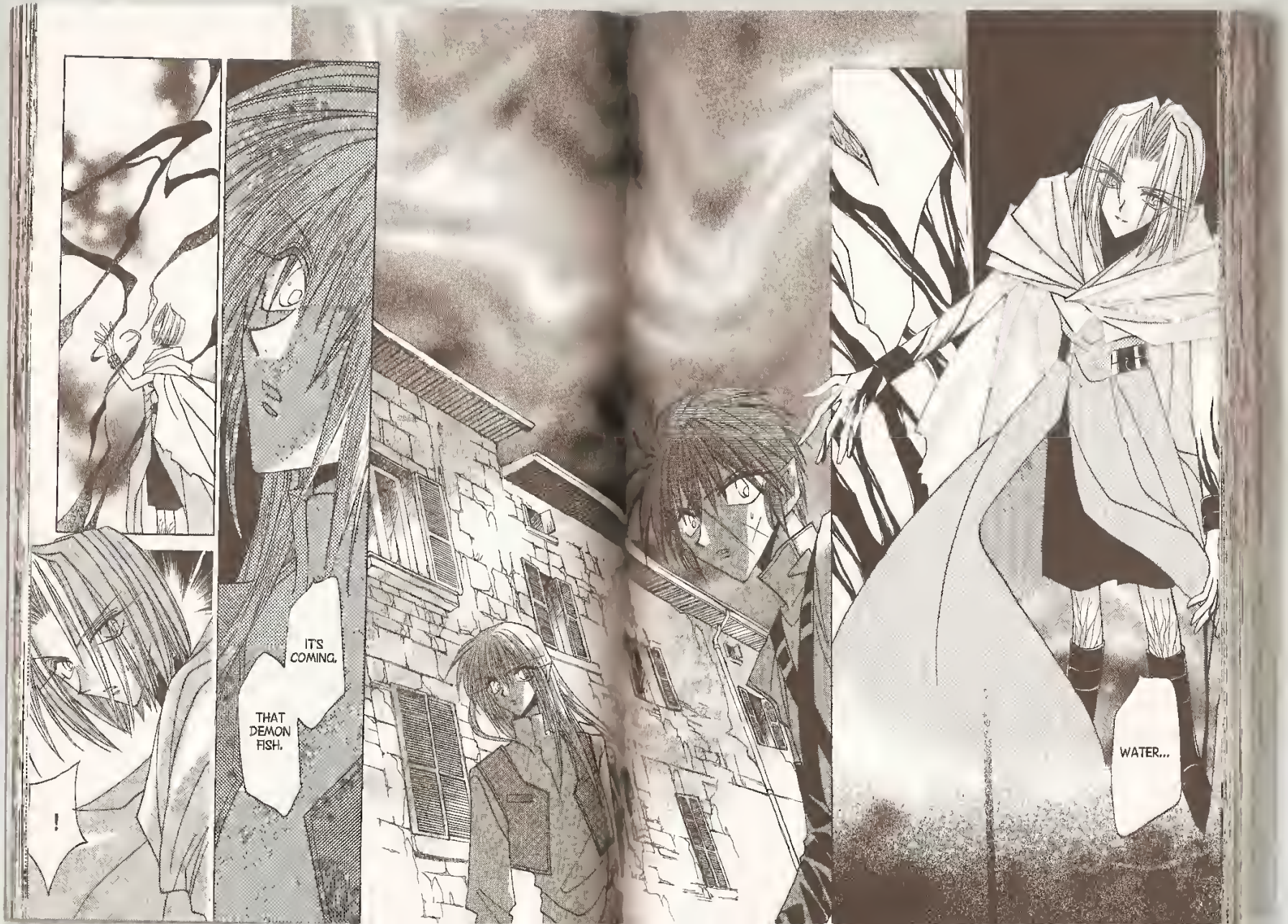


I WAS GONNA STAY LONGER.
WHY?
EH, IT DOESN'T MATTER.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "ALREADY"? IT'S ALMOST MORNING.
THATZ!
DON'T DO THAT!!!
YEESH, BETWEEN YOU AND RATH... ANYHOW, BACK ALREADY?
SO, WHAT'S GOING ON WITH SAABEL?
あむ
cernozura!! made this for us.
BOX lunches?!
YOU KNOW I CAN'T FUNCTION ON AN EMPTY STOMACH.
LET'S EAT!

YOU, IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE GREAT, MAN.
I DON'T GET IT, RUNE. YOU CAN CHOP UP DEMONS WITH THE BEST OF EM, BUT A FEW CORPSES MAKE YOU NERVOUS?
HUMAN CORPSES ARE MUCH DIFFERENT THAN DEMON ONES.
くらくら
OR MAYBE IT WAS ANOTHER DEMON ENTIRELY.
IF SHE DID, DID SHE KILL THEM, OR WAS IT METEAURA?
I WONDER IF KUON SHEENA GATHERED THEM ALL..
WHO KNEW SO MANY BODIES WERE HIDDEN AROUND TOWN?
WELL, MY FRIEND, YOU MIGHT WANT TO GET USED TO THEM, BECAUSE IF WE FAIL WITH OUR MISSION--
I KNOW.
I'LL GET OVER IT.
Hey, Rune!!
EEEEEEEK!
わたぐわたぐ

RATH, ARE YOU COMING WITH US?!
DON'T THINK SO.
BUG BOY HERE WOULD PROBABLY GIVE YOU AWAY.
BETTER ...
I'M RESTED AND READY TO PLAY.
TOO BAD WE CAN'T KILL HIM.
A VALID POINT.
そぐ
そぐ
HE RAN AWAY.
BUT I STILL HAVE HIS LITTLE PAL.
WE FIGURE, SAABEL WANTS HIM, SO AS LONG AS WE HAVE HIM, HE'LL FIND US.
OH, YES. HIM.
がっ
がっ
はぐ
はぐ
I CAN'T BELIEVE THESE TWO.

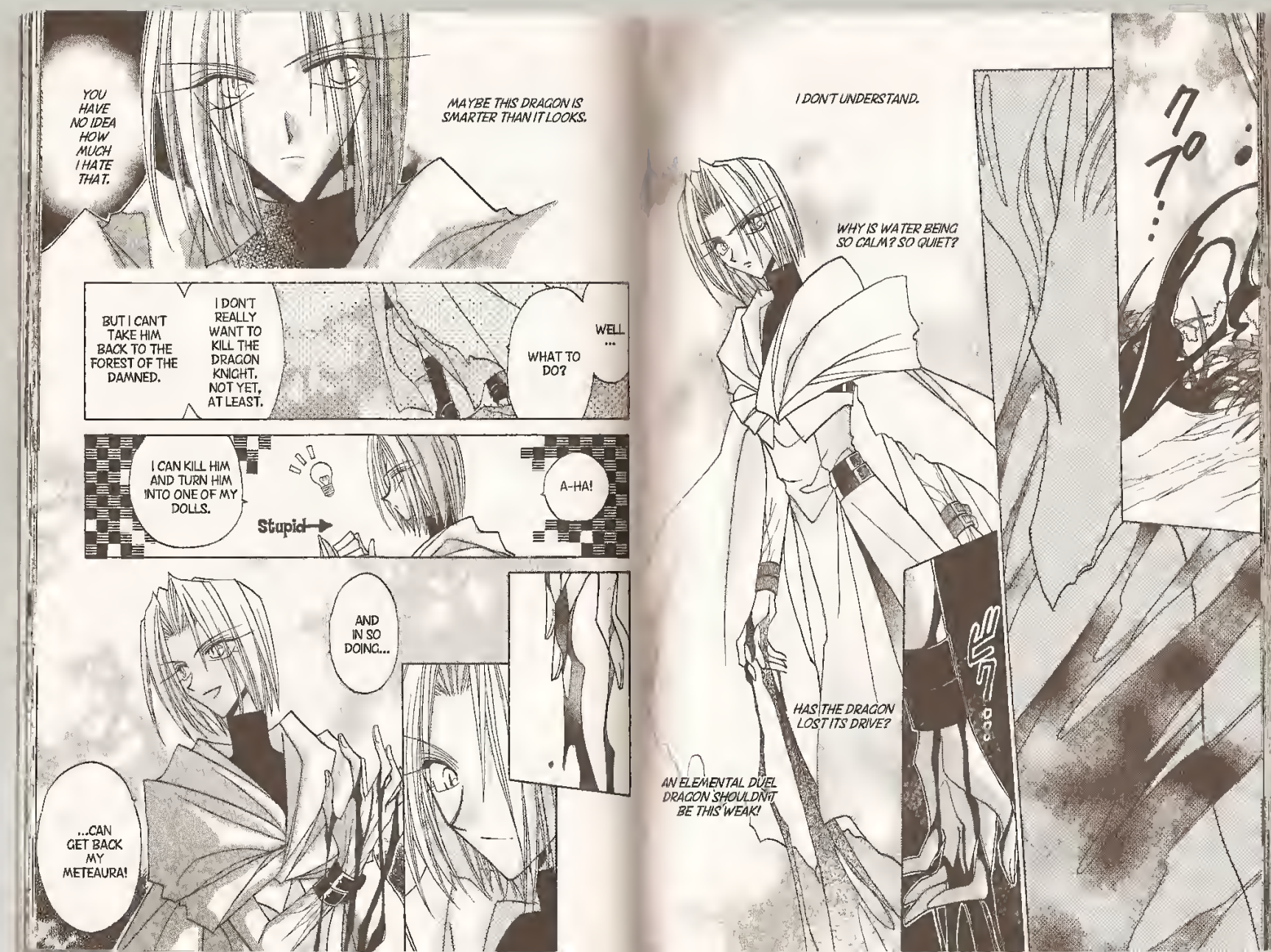

DON'T WORRY. I'LL BE THERE WHEN YOU NEED ME.
GOOD LUCK, GUYS.
I'M TRYING.
DON'T PUKE.
LET'S MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS.
SOME NEW SHINY FRIENDS. TREASURE. FIND SOME FOR ME.
GO!
GARABA!!


!
IT'S COMING.
THAT DEMON FISH.
WATER...

I DON'T LIKE SEAFOOD ON A GOOD DAY.
BUT WHEN IT'S AS BIG AS A HOUSE AND HALF-DEMON, IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE ME SCREAM.
Uuh?
IT'S A DEMON FISH LIKE VARAWOO.
THEN IT COULD OPEN A PORTAL TO KAINALDIA LIKE VARAWOO.

WHAT'S HE THINKING?
TIME TO MAKE MYSELF USEFUL.
IS HE TRYING TO SEPARATE ME FROM WATER?
...BUT IT'S USELESS.
HE CAN TRY...
LNG
LO...

THE PORTAL'S THROUGH ITS STOMACH!
IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE BEEN WOUNDED.
A SNEAK ATTACK?
A COWARDLY MOVE...


YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH I HATE THAT.
MAYBE THIS DRAGON IS SMARTER THAN IT LOOKS.
BUT I CAN'T TAKE HIM BACK TO THE FOREST OF THE DAMNED.
I DON'T REALLY WANT TO KILL THE DRAGON KNIGHT. NOT YET, AT LEAST.
WELL ...
WHAT TO DO?
I CAN KILL HIM AND TURN HIM INTO ONE OF MY DOLLS.
Stupid
A-HA!
AND IN SO DOING...
...CAN GET BACK MY METEAURA!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
WHY IS WATER BEING SO CALM? SO QUIET?
HAS THE DRAGON LOST ITS DRIVE?
AN ELEMENTAL DUEL DRAGON SHOULDN'T BE THIS WEAK!

SAABEL SHOULD BE...
...CHASING ME RIGHT NOW.
THIS ISN'T HOW I PLANNED IT.
THAT'S STRANGE.
Why are we running away?
I NEED TO BRING HIM BACK TO THATZ AND RUNE.
I NEED WATER.
I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING FIRST.
Why don't we find Garaba?
WHY DOES HE WANT WATER ANYWAY?
He must be a water demon or something.
THAT BASTARD.
ゴゴゴ
ゴゴゴ
ゴゴゴ
ゴゴゴ
WHERE ARE THE OTHER TWO?
I WANT A COMPLETE SET OF DRAGON KNIGHT DOLLS.
GARABA WILL BRING THEM TO ME!
!

I THOUGHT IF I PISSED HIM OFF, HE'D COME AFTER ME.
HMM...
Well, what now?
!!
IS IT SAABEL?!
He's trying to get his bug back!
GREAT...
LET'S JUST SQUASH HIM AND BE DONE WITH IT.

YOU CANNOT BEAT THEM SEPARATELY.
LEAD SAABEL BACK TO CARABA.
GO BACK TO YOUR FRIENDS.
CARABA ACTS AS A PORTAL TO THE DEMON REALM.
IF YOU DON'T FIND THEM BEFORE THEY ENTER, THEY'LL DIE.
!
!!
NOW!
COME ON...
MOVE TO THE LEFT.
WHIIIP
HEH, HEH, HEH...
RUN. RUN!
SHIT.

WHAT?
NO, IT'S NOT THE CORPSES.
THERE'S SOMETHING PAINFUL... INSIDE OF ME. SOME SORT OF PRESSURE...
THATZ ...
...I'M GONNA BE SICK.
COME ON.
YOU SAID YOU'D HELP ME.
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ハァハァ
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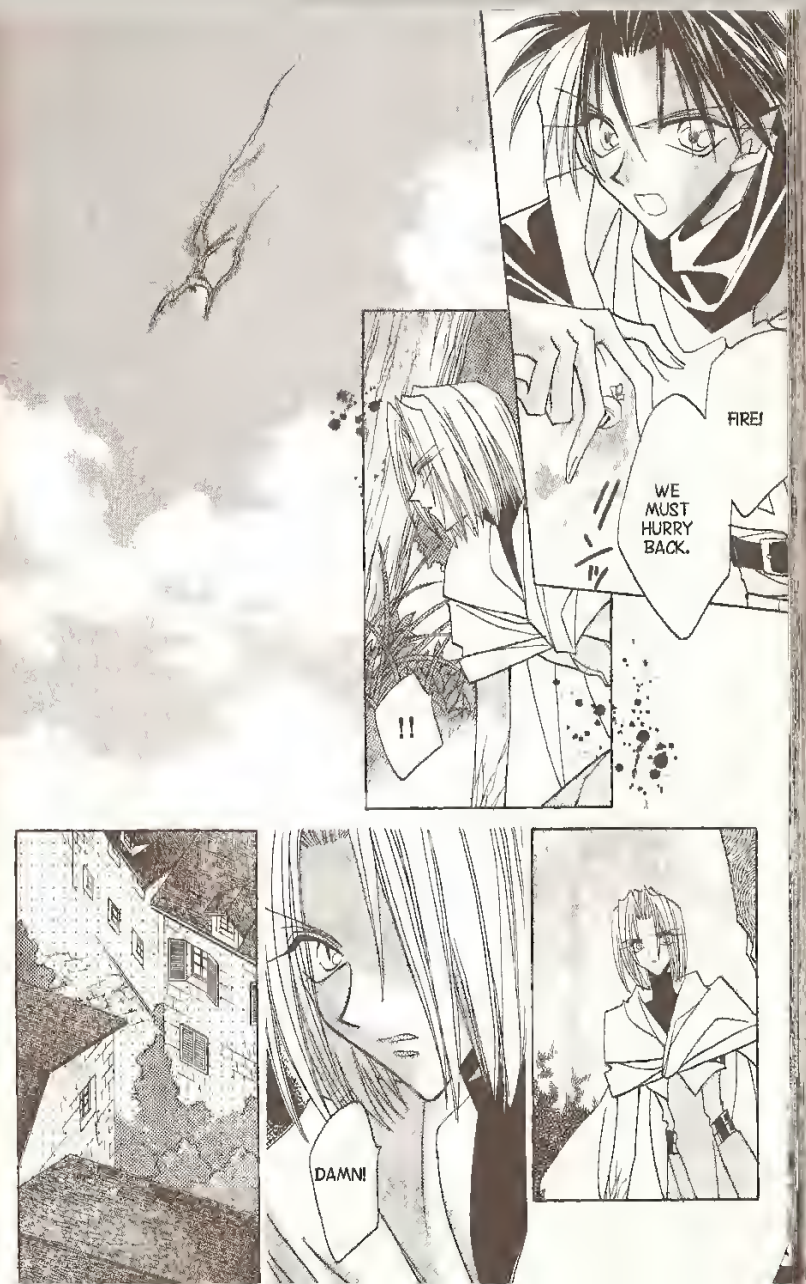

FIRE!
WE MUST HURRY BACK.
!!
DAMN!

ゴオオオ…
WHAT THE HELL?!
ゴオオオオオオ
IT'S RELEASING SOME KIND OF... OF ENERGY!
IT MUST KNOW WHAT WE'RE PLANNING.
PROBABLY EVEN KNOWS WHERE WE'RE HIDING.
THE FISH IS GETTING BIGGER!

I'M OKAY.
I HAVE EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL.
WHAT BETTER TO CONTROL A DEMON FISH THAN ANOTHER DEMON FISH?
BESIDES VARAWOO WANTED OUT.
IT'S THE POWER OF VARAWOO!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, RUNE?!
RUNE, YOU ARE SERIOUSLY FRIGHTENING ME.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
LOOK AT THE DIFFERENCE IN SIZE.
MY GOD... SUCH POWER...
WHAT?
WHAT'S THAT?

!!
NO.
SAABEL!!
.....
GARABA'S BODY CONTAINS...
...THE PORTAL TO THE DEMON REALM.
HOLY CRAP! WHY IS VARAWOO OUT?!
RUNE, YOU'RE CONTROLLING HIM?
YOU CAN DO THAT?!
RATH!
HE'LL PROBABLY BE ALONG ANY SECOND NOW.
WHERE'S SAABEL?
RATH!
BY THE WAY, GOOD THING YOU DIDN'T FOLLOW THROUGH WITH YOUR PLAN.

THE LIGHT OF A FAERIE?!
NO!
SAABEL'S BLACK WATER...
IT'S EXPANDING!
WHAT IS THIS? IMPOSSIBLE.
WHAT A NICE REUNION.
SAABEL!!
GARABA!
QUIT PLAYING AROUND AND SWALLOW THEM ALREADY!
WATER!!
ATTACK SAABEL!
VARAWOO!

OH, SHIT...

THE BLACK LAKE...
SPLASH
IT'S ALL AROUND US.
WE'RE IN SAABEL'S DEAD FOREST.

HUH?
WOW, YOU'RE RIGHT.
Shooting star? can't be.
YOU SEE THAT? SOMETHING'S FALLING.
HEY! THAT HURT!

IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE LOST AGAIN.
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HEH, HEH, HEH...
I'M NOT SURPRISED.
I THINK IT'S PATHETIC.
WHAT IS IT WITH THESE THREE? WHY DO THEY FRIGHTEN YOU SO BADLY?

WE'D BETTER GET MOVING AND FIND SOMEWHERE TO HIDE.
I'M SURE THAT BASTARD WILL BE HERE SOON. AND NOW WE'RE ON HIS TURF.
Ahh!
THAT MEANS THIS IS...
... KAINAL--
WHERE ARE YOU HIDING, SAABEL?
HE'S RIGHT.

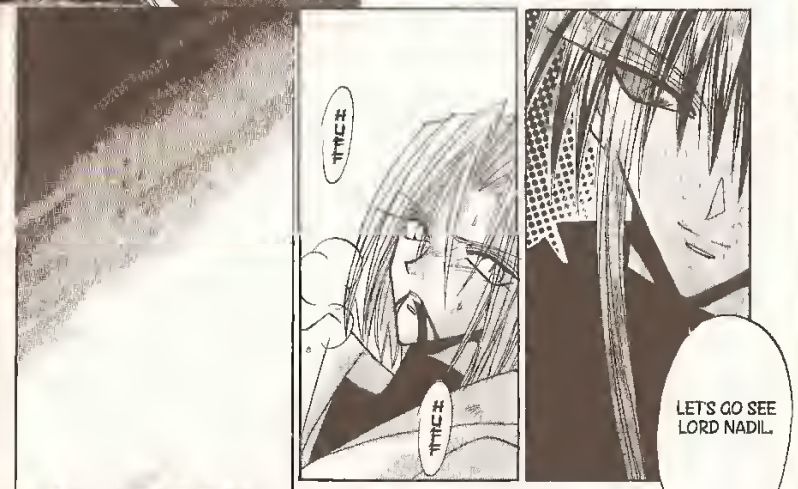
Dragon Knights

15

In Volume 15:

With so many parties traipsing their way through Kainaldia, it was only a matter of time until Kitchel and Ringleys ran into somebody they knew. But will it be friend or foe? Making matters worse, Nadil has seen fit to equip Saabel with new powers. The necromantic demon will undoubtedly become an even greater force to be reckoned with, if he can keep his new abilities under control, that is. And finally, our three Dragon Knights have made it to Kainaldia and begun the trek to Nadil's castle. But when a bizarre discovery reveals that the faerie Tintlet needs help, will Rune abandon his mission and his comrades to rescue his beloved?

Mineko Ohkami



Dragon Knights 14 End